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WESTERN AMERICANA

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BY MRS. FLORENCE LEE MALLINSON

FROM THE
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PREFACE

THE publishers beg the privilege of offering a word or two of explanation as to this book and its author. Both are remarkable, the first for what the author says and what she has achieved in her nine years in Alaska—the second, for what she is. Reaching America when but a young girl, from a home in that part of Wales which borders on England, without an education beyond that which the neighborhood schools provide, she already has developed some of the elements of greatness, and manifested talents which, in many respects, are of a very high order. She is laying the foundation for a useful life by the industry of the hands as well as of the head, in such strides of advancement that her readers may expect soon to hear from her again along similar lines, and in a broader scope, and to see and hear her on the platform.

SEATTLE-ALASKA COMPANY,
Publishers,
Seattle, Wash.

withstanding these items of commonplace heroism were stimulated by the very liberal material rewards which they brought me, I felt all the while that I was molding destiny against great odds—sowing valuable seed which would yield for me a harvest of ease and comfort in the days to come. I was buoyed up through it all by my one imperishable ambition to accumulate sufficient means to obtain as complete a musical education as my humble talents would allow. In this I am realizing success.

But during my stay and travels in Alaska, I improved very much available time by a study of the topography and capabilities of the country.

Few, if any, have seen more of Alaska, with their own eyes, than I have; and of those portions which I did not personally visit I learned as much about as is possible for one to accomplish who possesses a ready tongue for asking questions, and a reliable memory to retain the answers. So that when I left Alaska in the fall of 1913 I brought with me a fund of information about the country, which cannot fail to prove of value to those who contemplate going to the Northland.

I learned enough about the natural resources of the country to enable me to say that but a tithe of the gold in Alaska, as yet, has been discovered, or mined, and that the extent of the other metallic and non-metallic minerals of the country are yet but little known. The government has estimated the coal deposits at about 150,000,000,000 tons, about equally divided between anthracite and lignite. From all that I have heard from those who know best, these figures should be quadrupled. But when the oil resources of the country are discovered and developed, the fuel problem for half the world will have been solved. It is the same with a great variety of other deposits, chief among which are tin, copper, silver, the components of nitrates, and so on.

The fisheries of Alaska are capable of supplying the whole continent, and Europe, for generations to come, and its grazing lands are sufficient to provide meat, milk and butter for millions, while its agricultural resources alone will sustain, in prosperity, the families of a vast population. Five great and prosperous states will one day be politically carved out of Alaska, aside from the regions of the Seward Peninsula, and the vast region called Arctic Alaska, lying north of the Endicott Range of Mountains. Two of these probably will be composed of the Kuskokwim Valley and Basin, and the broad valley of the Lower Yukon. The other three will include the Central Yukon district, the Copper River Valley and adjacent basins, and Southeastern Alaska, respectively. When the last of these states is admitted to the Union, and the Seward Peninsula is heard knocking at the statehood door of the United States, and Arctic Alaska has become a separate territory, the population of Alaska will exceed five million souls, and its wealth will have become more than ten times that of the United States at the close of the Revolutionary War.

The climate of Alaska, as to certain extensive portions of the Territory, is severe. The winters are long; the summers short. But this is not the case with the whole country. When the means of communication and transportation have been improved, and the soil has been more extensively cultivated, it will be found that the Alaskan climate is one of the most valuable assets of its great resources. Even in its present raw state, Alaska is the most healthy portion of North America.

Its scenic beauties—its natural grandeur—are without an equal in any part of the earth. The country is now rapidly filling up with a most desirable population. No part of our land is achieving more rapid or substantial progress.

Respectfully,

FLORENCE LEE MALLINSON.

Seattle, Wash., Sept. 1, 1914.

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MRS. FLORENCE LEE MALLINSON.

MY TRAVELS

AND

ADVENTURES

IN

ALASKA

BY MRS. FLORENCE LEE MALLINSON

FOR NINE YEARS A RESIDENT IN THE
NORTHLAND

ILLUSTRATED

SEATTLE, WASH.
PUBLISHED BY THE
SEATTLE-ALASKA COMPANY
CHAS. R. TUTTLE, MANAGER
1914

INTRODUCTION

I HAVE written this small book about Alaska, and my travels and adventures in the Great Country, for several reasons. In the first place, I felt that the people of the "outside" should be informed of the hardships, risks, adventures and long, wearisome travels in calm and storm, which the pioneers of Alaska have had to endure; and it is only fair to say that, while but a small part of my adventures in the Northland are accounted for in this volume, severe and dangerous as they have been, they are common, in one way or another, to a vast multitude who ventured into the country eight, ten or twelve years ago. Very many of these daring people left their bodies in Alaska, some of them in the exposures of the trail, so that I feel that the most remarkable thing to be noted concerning my adventures is that I survived them all, to return in health and strength to the haunts of civilization.

In the nine years during which I traveled and struggled in Alaska, and worked at cooking and housekeeping, far beyond my natural strength, although these sacrifices were made under the watchful, tender care of my husband, and, not-

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MY TRAVELS
AND
ADVENTURES
IN
ALASKA

By Mrs. Florence Lee Mallinson

For nine years a resident of the Northland

CHAPTER I.

ALASKA AS A PICTURE.

ITS MANY PHASES—THE WOMAN AT WORK IN ALASKA—SEEKING A FORTUNE—HER MISSION TO THE "OUTSIDE"—TELLING OF A LAND WHERE IT IS EASIER TO DISCOVER A GOLD MINE THAN TO FIND A DICTIONARY—WHAT CONSTITUTES THE ELOQUENCE OF A TRUE PICTURE—THE TRUE PICTURE OF ALASKA FORECASTED—A NEW WONDERLAND—AN INVITATION AND A WARNING.

THREE hundred and fifty million dollars in gold; two hundred million for Alaska, proper, and one hundred and fifty million for the Canadian Yukon—The Twin Northlands!

Believe me, this is a wonderful, a golden picture, which a few daring pioneer men, and a fewer brave pioneer women have painted in about a decade and a half, for the great world of mankind to behold and admire.

But this is only the golden side of the picture. There is another side, many other sides, to this picture.

A true picture is not all golden. It must have its shades—its shadows—as well as its lighter colors, if it is to talk in the eloquence of art, or in the silence of the grand, the noble, the true, the beautiful, the real, to its beholders.

I am one of the pioneer women spoken of in the first paragraph of this first chapter of my book. I have lived in "The Great Country," in the interior of it, among its Indians and white people; traveled thousands of miles on its rivers and through its impressive wilds; been thrilled many times by its awe-inspiring sunsets, its mighty glaciers, its lofty mountains, its limitless valleys; have been enchanted and entranced by its wonderfully mysterious Northern Lights, which at times garment the whole of the heavenly dome in an ever folding and ever unfolding, endless blend of changing colors, as if pealing out great volumes of magnetic laughter or melody upon the earth; traveled among and admired, worshiped, these and many other thrilling phenomena; but, much more than all this, I have

MRS. MALLINSON AND HER SECOND FAIRBANKS CABIN.

THE HERMON STUCK ON A SANDBAR.

physically contacted, by more than visions can realize, other sides of this variegated picture of life in Alaska.

In short I have WORKED in Alaska—worked in the very heart and furnace of physical and material industry—in a vigorous exercise of what is called brawn, although the reader scarcely would believe it from a casual look at my apparently frail stature. I repeat, I have worked as housekeeper for my husband, and as cook for him and his fourteen or more miners, not because I was compelled to, but, because I loved to work, in a real struggle to win an Alaskan fortune for myself.

And I have visited and am visiting the "Outside" to tell the good people of the older regions of America about this interesting picture which Alaska and life in its high latitudes constitute—about all, or many sides or phases of it, its happily disappearing hardships, its fading shadows, as well as its gladsome, glowing colors—about the adventures, the exposures, the risks, the hairbreadth escapes of limb and life; the good and ill fortunes of its pioneers; their needs from which they have suffered, but which now are being supplied, as well as, in such strength of spirit as may atone for inherent defects, concerning its more entertaining wonders.

So many of the interesting, important and instructive aspects of the Alaskan picture have been neglected by writers on this subject that I realize my task to be very great, indeed, and I approach it in a sense of my poverty of qualifications, in many respects. I have lived so long in a land where it has been easier to discover a paying gold mine than to lay hands on a dictionary, that I have lost much of the polish of the modern city in the matter of linguistics, and naturally substituted therefor the parlance of the camp and the trail, which may unduly animate readers of highly cultivated literary tastes. But this may infuse a spirit of industrial conquest among them, which may be needed as a prelude to a more general prosperity.

I wish the reader to receive at my hands, or from the point of this irrepressible pencil, a clear vision of the ALASKAN PICTURE as it really is, not as it sometimes is drawn to suit the demands of polished phraseology, or to meet the exigencies of metaphor. Readers desire to look into the home-life, or camp-life of Alaska pioneer settlements, and to accomplish this they need to be told of their mining camps and their dwellings; of their trail-life and their explorations among the creeks in search of gold; of their elementary mining operations with pick, shovel and pan; of their temporary lodgements, which often have to be deserted when the colors forsake the pan and the dirt no longer promises rewards; of the primitive camp food supply, and the trail menu; of the improvised utensils, uses and "comforts" of the prospectors; of the processes and progress of developing a placer mine; of the endurances, hardships and dangers overcome or unheeded in the scramble for gold; of the excitements and the rivalries of the "stampede"; of the beginnings of new settlements; of the unique manifestations of pioneer brotherhood; of the interesting phases of pioneer honesty and the "square deal"; of the many inflexible applications of the unwritten code of camp and trail; of the relative costs of labor, food and transportation; of the wonderful growth and development of the "staying powers" of prospectors, and of the early settlers in their long, weary periods of watchful waiting; of their hunting and fishing excursions in the interests of food supply, diversion and discovery; of their social intercourse between tents, cabins and camps; of the lonely days, weeks, months and years, with little or nothing to read, except the few publications which may have served as wrapping-paper on the trail, and which are read, re-read and studied, until involuntarily committed to memory; of the joys and inspirations attending the advent of better things by the overcoming processes of pioneer life; of the rewards of patient industry, daring adventure and unwearied waiting; of the rise of the settlements and the beginnings of social life; of the depredations of the saloon, the gambling habit, and their attendant evils; of the safety and loyal protection to honorable women, in camp, on trail alone or in the company of others; of the rewards of thrift and the punishments of idleness and vice; of the mighty forces of Alaskan camp and pioneer settlement life, which level social beginnings up to the status of practical ethics; of the religious tendencies, or aversions to church dogmas, of the early pioneers, and the rise of worship, on a broader plane of brotherhood, in the growing new settlements; of the appearance of a new civilization with its homes, families and children, and the rise of educational and ethical culture on higher foundations.

Yes, and believe me, if readers are to profit by a study of this wonderful Alaskan picture, they must come along with me very close to nature's great heart, as it throbs in the Northland. We must study the processes of natural development —of the progress of soil and climate—and see how the ALL WISE has evolved a mighty, new land in these lofty latitudes, filled with natural bounties, in an ever overflowing supply, for the needy millions of the earth; and we must understand that this grand work has been finished to a point at which it opens its gates to these millions, who are willing to pay the price of industry for this wealth, at a time when the world loudly is calling for relief.

And then we must entertain ourselves as we behold the coming of mankind to this new land, and look upon the people distributing themselves along its coasts, or over its wonderful valleys, and on its mountain slopes, as well as on the borders of its creeks and rivers, digging gold, starting marts of trade, engaging in agricultural pursuits, cultivating gardens, building homes, instituting stores, workshops and new industries; engaging in trade and commerce, and calling for better transportation facilities. We should, I say, learn the lessons taught by this interesting phase of the Alaskan picture, and enter psychologically, at least, into the spirit of peaceful rivalry which the rising new cities show towards each other, in the efforts of their builders to build grander and more rapidly than their neighbors. This new exhibit of Alaskan enterprise and push, which comes in laudable sequence to the earlier struggles, presages the quickly advancing industrial and commercial importance of the new land. It is the dawn of a new era of prosperity in Alaska, which we, the pioneers of an earlier period, prepared foundations for; and we are, as you must be, delighted to behold it.

We are to see much of this interesting and instructive side of the picture in this work; and, kind reader, although a mere woman pens it, you shall get a somewhat comprehensive view of the greatness of Alaska, and the far-reaching plans of the National Government, and those of the splendid army of private, individual capitalists, which now are at work surveying, locating, projecting and building vast transportation systems, as well as mining, smelting, fishery, coaling and other industrial enterprises of country-wide importance.

I shall point out to you the now passing shadows of the great picture, which until recently filled it with discordant blotches, properly called "Forestry Service Tyranny," or "Conservation Intrigue," which put a "roasting" lid on Alaskan enterprise and progress and which we settlers loyally rebelled against. We did not then, neither do we now desire monopoly to stalk in Alaska, but we demand sufficient concentration of capital to develop The Great Country; and because it is great in all the aspects of its wealth-producing resources, its needs demand greatness in the factors necessary for its speedy and wholesome exploitation.

We are not afraid of "big things" in Alaska. It is a big country, and its people at once become stimulated by large ideas. Our country is GREAT, and the enterprise of its pioneers naturally reaches to the summit of greatness. We demand something more than the pinched, dwarfed conservation-locked pessimism of Eastern statesmanship, which is teaching us that all this is a thin cover to hide the old truism that it makes all the difference in the world "whose ox is gored." I shall show you that Eastern pessimism must fade and vanish like dew before the awakening, life-giving sunlight of Alaskan and Pacific Western optimism.

Let the reader not fall into the idea—the false conclusion—that because a woman's pen is wielded on these pages, they will lack either power, bravery or intellectual force, on that account. We up in Alaska can think, talk and write on the great economic questions which enter into the problems of our country's development, as forcefully and effectively as any of those less closely connected with their solution. Alaska needs a full and continued supply of the Franklin K. Lane mold of statesmanship, as well as a prolongation of the services of men like Delegate Wickersham.

As I shall endeavor to develop the great picture of Alaska, it will be seen that the artist as well as the artisan have much work to perform on the canvas before the task is completed. True, Alaska, with the valuable help of Seattle, has secured the backbone of an interior railway transportation system, and this will stimulate the construction of private lines, and tend to develop the growth of ocean commerce, but the Northland needs a further and even larger installment of legislation at the hands of Congress. There is likely to be Eastern and Southern opposition to much of this, and for this reason, another campaign of education as to the resources and reasonable requirements of Alaska must be organized and carried out during the Winter and Spring of 1914-15.

I suggest, in relation to this, that Alaska shall come to the front more vigorously than in the past, on its own account. It may be necessary, and if necessary, it will be expedient, that a large delegation of Alaska women shall go to Washington City to take the matter of educating the Congress in hand. They properly might make the trip and do the required work in characteristic Alaskan costumes, which, believe me, would not be anything like as "savage" as those worn by the ladies of the fashionable "outside" cities.

What is more, such a delegation would voice the conditions and needs of the country by those without whose services Alaska would not, today, measure up to its present status, because, dear people, what women have contributed to the economic and domestic life of the picture here being introduced constitutes one of its life-giving features. Moreover, if the pessimists of the East and South will not listen to the noble, self-sacrificing women of Alaska, they will be moved by no force under the heavens.

I will briefly mention here still another phase of the Alaskan picture, to the development of which we, reader and author, are about to address ourselves, which, to my tastes and inclinations, is as instructive as, and certainly more entertaining than, any of the others. It is that aspect which combines the romances, the adventures and the thrilling experiences of the pioneer history of Alaska; and, in particular, one overshadowing adventure of travel on the Mighty Yukon, in which the lives of a large party were held in the balances of great danger for many weary, waiting, eventful days and nights, until happy deliverance came.

This wonderful picture of Alaska, as an invitation to mankind to come and share the bounties of God's New Land of opportunities with us, also will be considered, with an admonition from the "Songs of a Sourdough," which I find tucked away just behind Robert W. Service's prelude to "The Trail of Ninety-Eight":

"This is the land of the Yukon, and ever she makes it plain:
Send not your foolish and feeble; send me your strong and your sane.
Strong for the red rage of battle; sane, for I harry them sore;
Send me men girt for the combat, men who are grit to the core;
Swift as the panther in triumph, fierce as the bear in defeat,
Sired of a bulldog parent, steeled in the furnace of heat.

Send me the best of your breeding; lend me your
chosen ones;
Them will I take to my bosom, them will I call
my sons;
Them will I gild with my treasure, them will I
glut with my meat;
But the others—the misfits, the failures—I trample them under my feet."

CHAPTER II.

DEVELOPING THE PICTURE OF ALASKA.

THE HEAD OF THE EARTH—HEARING OUR PLANET THINK IN THE FAR NORTH—THE WONDERS OF THE NORTHERN LIGHTS—WHAT SOME OF THE POETS SAY ABOUT THESE DISPLAYS—"NORTHERN LIGHTNING" A SCENIC ASSET—THE BATTLE OF THE SKIES.

AS the reader probably well knows, a number of scientific men have thought, talked and written about the earth, holding it to be somewhat in the constitution of a man, and that by its tidal and atmospheric waves, it breathes like a man. We know that it walks round the sun, with its head, which we call North, uppermost, and that by its GAIT, it brings forth the seasons.

Now, if the North is the head of our planet, and the magnetic pole the center of its forces, I naturally conclude, from a study of this cephalic formation, that the nearer one approaches this cerebral region, the greater one's opportunities become for hearing the earth think.

It is along this line, may we not infer, that the grandest and most rugged races of mankind, mentally and morally, always are found in the highest habitable latitudes. This is true of Europe and America, and, if any exceptions to the rule are found in other countries, they probably are due to the absence of the elements of Christian civilization.

On these grounds, if you please, may I not invite people to settle in Alaska, where they can hear the old earth think, and do better thinking for themselves—where, surrounded by inspirational phenomena, they will part company with phantoms and false beliefs, and harden up a bit, physically, mentally and morally, and enter upon new and more prosperous methods of living.

Believe me, dear reader, the climate and other natural conditions which surround one in Alaska are animating, invigorating, and, in a good measure, thrilling. One cannot create the whole picture of Alaska with brush and paint and canvas. Not half the poetry of its scenery could be materialized or externalized by that method alone. We are compelled to resort to word-painting, and wherein this and the camera fail, we can only worship in silence, and turn our wonderful creations over to the glories of spiritual inspirations.

Robert W. Service faces us with the latter situation when he writes:

"Day after day was dark as death, but ever and
    ever at nights,
With a brilliancy that grew and grew, blazed up
    the Northern Lights."

Of course you know Robert Service. He belongs to Alaskans by ties of poetry, which bind closer and stronger than those of mutual pioneer experiences can do. Of his writings Esther Birdsall Darling beautifully says:

"The North, it is yours through his verses—
  With him you can follow the Trail,
And exult with those who fight and win,
  Or suffer with those who fail."

It may be unfortunate for me that I begin the development of my picture of Alaska with the wonderful Northern Lights. You know it is difficult to paint motion. The science of photography which has given us the theatre of "movies" has grappled with the eloquence of motion with great success, but when the actuality of blending colors is present, only the human eye can properly combine changing colors with motion. This vision appropriates, jointly, the moving, changing variegation with inspirational concepts, or intuitions of these objects of thought, which appear to carry one, in consciousness, into their interiors, there to behold the real.

However, I am not given to abstractions, and I do not propose to trouble the reader with the abstract, or abstruse phases of these wonderful Northern Lights. It is with their appearance alone that we are concerned, and when we have found a setting for them in our picture of Alaska, as a scenic attraction, this will suffice.

I am much inclined to regard these mysterious displays of Aurora as Arctic lightning, and to say of them, in the language of Sam C. Dunham, in "The Goldsmith of Nome and Other Verses," that:

"Far out where the sullen darkness
  Palls the silent, ice-chained sea,
Spring, low-arched, the fragile North-lights
  O'er the realm of mystery;
From their haunts beneath the crescent,
  Where the murky shadows lie,
Come Aurora's pale magicians,
  With their festoons for the sky,
And while the Color Sergeant musters
  His Immortal seven
To hang their banners from the dome
  And drape the walls of heaven.
Straight he hurls his shafts of silver
  High up in the star-gemmed blue,
Where the wraiths of light, soft-tinted
  And of swifty changing hue,
Through the long and ghastly vigils
  Of the voiceless Arctic night
Weirdly gleam and faintly whisper
  As they tremble out of sight."

But these impressive Northern Lights are among the wonders of Alaska, where, especially in the long winters, when the atmosphere is normal, and the sky is clear, the nights are made glorious by their presence, as a mantle of variegation under the heavenly dome. In no other country can these strange lights be seen in a more awakening prospect than in Alaska. However, it is not as easy to dismiss these displays from thought and feeling as is the case with more easily understood phenomena. They enter into both thought and feeling, until one naturally expresses the lines of Mr. Service in his "Ballad of the Northern Lights" when he says:

"Oh, it was wild and weird and wan, and ever in camp o' nights,
We would watch and watch the silver dance of the mystic Northern Lights.
And soft they danced from the Polar sky and swept in primrose haze;
And swift they pranced with their silver feet and pierced with a blinding blaze.
They danced a cotillion in the sky; they were rose and silver shod;
It was not good for the eyes of man—'twas a sight for the eyes of God.
It made us mad and strange and sad, and the gold whereof we dreamed
Was all forgot, and our only thought was of the lights that gleamed.
Oh, the tundra sponge it was golden brown, and some was a bright blood red;
And the reindeer moss gleamed here and there like the tombstones of the dead.

* * * *

And the skies of night were alive with light, with a throbbing, thrilling flame;
Amber and rose and violet, opal and gold it came.
It swept the sky like a giant scythe, it quivered back to a wedge;

Argently bright, it cleft the night with a wavy
golden edge.
Pennants of silver waved and streamed, lazy banners unfurled;
Sudden splendors of sabres gleamed, lightning
javelins were hurled.
There in our awe we crouched and saw with our
wild, uplifted eyes
Charge and retire the hosts of fire in the battlefield of the skies."

These celestial displays, when atmospheric conditions are favorable, are about as common to all parts of Alaska as are the nights and the skies. They function not only as light, but as cheer to the traveler, and may be set down among the records of the mercenary tourist as one of the great scenic assets of this Northland. They contribute an aspect of life which invests the country with a special charm and they glorify the nights of Alaska with a wonderful wealth of eloquence.

Its gravel valleys are not more charged with grains of the yellow metal than are the heavens painted with golden colors. Thus, Alaska is golden both as to its carpet and its dome.

With this brief but glowing account, the best part of which is venturesomely borrowed from the poets, the reader kindly will observe the first great feature of the Alaskan picture.

RUSSIAN MISSION.

During the night, like day so bright,
  At any time at any hour,
With never the aid of a kerosene light,
  Waxen candle or electric power,
With never a strain in one's eyes,
  With perfect ease, one plainly sees
To read, under Alaska's glorious skies.

—*My Scrap Book.*

"In the woods along the river
Where the midnight sunbeams quiver."

—*Francis Dudley Yoakum.*

CHAPTER III.

TRAVELS IN A MIGHTY LAND.

TRAVELS THROUGH A LAND OF WONDERS—ALASKA'S SCENIC BEAUTY A VALUABLE ASSET—ROUTES OF TRAVEL TO THE INTERIOR—VAST AND RAPID IMPROVEMENTS IN TRANSPORTATION CONVENIENCES—NATURAL GRANDEUR OF PRINCE WILLIAM SOUND—A MARINE ENCLOSURE OF GREAT POSSIBILITIES.

NOW, dear reader, come with me, for we shall travel—travel round and through the Great Country, the mysterious Northland; and we shall behold all its most interesting scenery. We shall look upon its great, towering mountains, as they rise in majesty, or arrange themselves in partly connected chains, dividing the country into climatic and resource provinces; visit the unsolvable glaciers, and look upon them from the trails and roads that wind through the passes which lead from the coast to the interior, or from some of their summits; journey up and down the mighty rivers of the new land, taking in the several towns and settlements en route, and visiting many of the creeks and mining camps of the tributary streams, where golden fortunes have been found or not found; wander through the streets or by-ways of some of the principal settlements, and look into their life-destroying saloons and dance halls, where fortunes, characters and even lives have been sacrificed on the altars of poorly illuminated depravity.

These dens of vice, common to the experiences of all new gold-discovery countries, happily are departing from Alaska.

In these travels the author will be eyes for the reader and we shall not only feast vision upon the beauty, grandeur and thrilling aspects of mountain, glacier, dashing cascade, gently flowing river, undulating valley and limitless plain, but we shall try to enter into some of the more notable experiences of those who have traveled these routes in the days now happily gone, when the means of transportation or conveniences of travel were far below their present somewhat improved status.

In connection with our travels on the Mighty Yukon, we shall enter into, endure and escape from some of its perils of navigation, incident to the experimental period of Alaska's earlier pioneer years. In these, the reader will have an opportunity to at least mentally share with the writer in her adventures of travel in the Northland.

This important part of our wonderful picture of Alaska developed, we shall add the more practical features of the surpassing resources of the country, and the swiftly developing enterprises, industrial, commercial and otherwise, which now are raising this new land to conditions of civilization and thrift, affording a wide range of profitable opportunities for the homeseekers of the world.

But, believe me, kind reader, the country which can boast the grandeur of natural scenery that Alaska contains, and the riches of phenomena which its natural status presents to tourist and traveler, possesses a source of wealth in these assets which, as the years roll by, will become a most profitable incentive to tourist travel, so highly important to land and ocean transportation interests the world over. Possibly very few have adequately estimated the value to the people of the United States, as a whole, of the several scenic aspects of Alaska, together with its invigorating, health-giving climate. As these valuable attractions become known throughout the older portions of America, in Europe and other parts of the earth, hundreds of thousands will annually visit this great, new land, to mentally and physically improve their general conditions, to feast upon its inspiring natural attractions, and to imbibe the stimulus of its life-giving natural forces.

Just in the measure that Alaska becomes famed throughout the world for the riches of its scenery and the health-giving forces of its climate, its people will become wealthy through the enlarged markets which its tourist travel will create.

"Let others sing of those who've won
  Full hoard of virgin gold!
I strike the lyre for those who've none,
  But yet are strong and bold,
Who've blazed the trails through a pathless waste
And on the world's new chart have traced
The lines which lead where the treasure's placed,
  And all their secrets told."

—Sam C. Dunham

But let us begin our journeys of sightseeing travels in the Northland. Let us together go to the Land of Gold; the country of the Midnight Sun and the Northern Lights; to the home of snow-capped mountains, towering into the clouds; to the wilds where glaciers glisten in the sunlight; the regions where enchanting lakes nestle in the mighty mountains, "on whose mirror-like surfaces are seen the most wonderful reflections; the land of mighty rivers, with their broad valleys of flowers and birds; the land of tumbling cascades, roaring rapids and game animals."

The literature of the Yukon and White Pass Route well declares that what was but a few years ago an almost impenetrable region of mystery, personally known only to a few intrepid explorers, has become suddenly transformed to a land of easy access. The two great entrances from the South Coast, that by the White Pass & Yukon Railway, from Skagway, and that by the Copper River & Northern Railway from Cordova, have opened the vast interior of the country to tourists and fortune-seekers.

The third route, by way of Bering Sea and the Yukon, remains about as it was ten years ago, except that it has been improved greatly as to conveyances. Hence, the day of the dog sledge as a means of getting into the country over the first two routes named has passed. It had not passed when I first found my weary way to the interior of Alaska. On my second trip I made the ocean voyage to Cordova, and from that initial coast point forged my way by stage and otherwise, finally to Fairbanks, where since that time a very good government road has been constructed, and even then a comfortable railway had been put in operation over a considerable distance of the route.

Surely, in this day, a large degree of comfort, comparatively, awaits the traveler to Alaska, while in my first journey of adventure, although I am still a young woman, only hardships and the dangers of the primitive trail were available. Now, one may go to the interior of the Northland in a commodious steamer all the way, changing boats at the mouth of the Yukon, and changing again, according to the tributary river one wishes to travel on, until the destination is reached.

Or if this be not the route chosen, one may ride in a comfortable steamer to Cordova, thence in a parlor car for more than a hundred miles through the mountain passes, and thence by stage over the government road to Fairbanks. If the "inside" route be chosen, a little less than a thousand miles of water travel carries one to Skagway, where, by changing from steamer to railway, one may experience a delightful journey over the White Pass & Yukon Railroad to White Horse, where a comfortable steamer will convey the passenger to any point on the Yukon or Tanana Rivers.

Such is the transformation wrought in a few short years, and the end of improvements in transportation and travel facilities is not yet reached. In a short time, by the grace of the National Government of the United States, tourists and business people may depart from Seattle in a choice of the finest steamers that float, proceed to Prince William Sound, thence by parlor and sleeping cars to Fairbanks, and thence to almost any part of Alaska by rail or steamship.

I mention these data in the progress of Alaska, in passing, to indicate with what swiftness the new land is bowing to the destined dominion of the whole earth by the industry and genius of mankind. It will not be long before Alaska will be at the doors of all nations which have transportation facilities of their own, or before the people of the world will be looking for a country still farther to the northwest.

We now will journey to Fairbanks, Alaska, departing by steamship from Seattle, proceeding via Cordova. The ocean distance is about 1,200 miles, and the accommodations are first class. Arriving at Cordova, a high order of entertainments begins. Approaching the town over these far northern waters, we might, at first glance, fancy ourselves in a tropical country, but on looking northward towards the lofty mountains, we observe that they are gorgeously robed in snow and ice. From this thrilling prospect we realize that we are traveling towards the Arctic Circle. We at once are impressed that we are nearing a mountain-walled coast line.

In this situation the tourist of our party is alive to the charms of the seashore, but if there be those among us who are in search of golden treasure, the thoughts of such may disregard this scenic grandeur, and fleet to the wilds far beyond this majestic array of nature's mighty monuments. But the scene is one well calculated to inspire rapture.

As a tourist has aptly written: "The ship plows on through waters of ever-changing hue, past heights that are forever white. Whales come blowing to the surface to sport upon the waves or to engage other marine monsters in fierce combat, and herds of porpoises go tumbling past." It is here that the lands which rise to direct us into Prince William Sound break into view, and as we advance, we recall what we have read about this wonderful place, and realize that our ship is entering the future great commercial marine enclosure of North American destiny. We are thrilled by the thought that on the rugged borders of this great entrance to Alaska there soon will rise a vast city—a metropolis of world renown.

We strain our eyes for a glimpse of Portage Bay, yet hidden from view, and wonder if the new city which is to rise in the effects of the Government trunk line railway from the coast to the interior—to Fairbanks, of course—will not circle the borders of this remarkable harbor, one day in the near future. Naturally, as we advance nearer and nearer to the wonderful new land, our mental visions rise and we almost look upon this new city, as yet existing only in expectation. We think of Seward on the one hand and Cordova on the other, both watching and waiting and hoping to realize railway terminal renown, and we wonder what the outcome will be. We involuntarily are impressed that the National Government will find reasons for locating a new site, and building a completely new city, and this impression, rising from a "hunch" indefinable, leads the mind to speculate as to what its name will be. The human thinker naturally is speculative, and prone to indulge visions of the future. In this case it forges a name for the expected new city which instantly flies to the tongue in the form of the word LANE.

If the future great metropolis of Alaska is to rise at some point on Prince William Sound, not yet blessed with a fixed name, the circumstance surely provides an opportunity for honoring the man—the present Secretary of the Interior—who is doing so much to bring the Northland to the attention of the world, and to provide it with transportation facilities, which are so needful to develop its vast, rich, varied natural resources.

But of this, as we continue to think, a difficulty rises, for how could Secretary Lane give to the new city his own name? He certainly would have the power to do so, if the act is to be performed during his administration. All I can say is that, if, in some way, this privilege—this right to give to the expected new city a name—can be delegated to the good people of Alaska, they will make short work of it, and the result will be that LANE will become world famous.

But these and other reveries are disturbed as new aspects of the wonderful scenery bordering Prince William Sound on the north break upon our vision. Having entered the Sound our good ship turns to the east and steams towards Cordova. At this point one has been inspired to write:

"The westering sun, gleaming across the wide passage from sound to sea, lights the billowing waters with a flood of color, and the vessel is riding in an element that now is violet, now carmine, now gold."

When my friends first visited Cordova it was no more than a prospectors' outfitting hamlet, but on my second trip it had been transformed to a prosperous town—to the status of ambitious beginnings of city life. It presents commodious business buildings, good wharfage accommodations and boasts a railroad running considerably more than one hundred miles into the interior, towards Fairbanks, with a branch to the Bonanza Copper Mines at Kennicott, giving a total of nearly two hundred miles.

Cordova is located on a picturesque site, and rapidly is becoming an interesting city. It combines a deep-water harbor with comparatively easy access to the interior of the country. Its advertising literature, which must be read with the consideration that all such productions call for, declares that Cordova, being "sheltered by forest and mountain, its air has the softness of a Puget Sound atmosphere. But back of it, seaming the mountain sides, are great glacial masses. Fifty miles away are two of the earth's icy marvels, Child's and Miles' glaciers, which tourists are able to reach comfortably over the Copper River & Northwestern Railway, the trip affording an opportunity to see how, in the construction of this remarkable road, extraordinary difficulties were met and overcome. The railway makes one of its numerous crossings of the Copper River between the famous glaciers, and through unexpected foliage and flowers a few steps from the train brings one into close view of a most stupendous spectacle. Along the river's edge for three miles Child's glacier lifts its colossal face three hundred feet high. From a point back in the mountains, seventy-five miles away, its gigantic body winds along slope and chasm, ever accumulating in the range and ever losing at the river, where riven tons at frequent intervals crash down to spot the water with floes.

"Leaving Cordova, the route lies across the Sound to Valdez Basin, a course that inspires in the lover of Nature, admiration and awe. Ahead is a range arrayed in that snowy whiteness with which the traveler is now familiar. But to starboard in stately succession come into view tremendous rocks, whose castellated tops may be wreathed in snow, but whose precipitous sides exhibit the grim aspect of their native grayness. From frowning crag and dark forest depth—from shadowy inlet and the wide, empty level of the surrounding water—there comes upon the beholder a sense of great solitude—of silence infinite, primeval, mystical. Out of this wondrous silence, banishing its spell, may come the beating of a laugh—the white man's canoe—bearing bold prospectors and their grub to some hoped-for bonanza, and the imagination is diverted to play upon their fate." As this is done one may appropriately recall the lines of Robert W. Service in the "Spell of the Yukon," as follow:

"There's gold, and it's haunting and haunting;
  It's luring me on as of old;
Yet it isn't the gold that I'm wanting
  So much as just finding the gold.
It's the great, big, broad land 'way up yonder,
  It's the forests where silence has lease;
It's the beauty that thrills me with wonder,
  It's the stillness that fills me with peace.

"I've stood in some mighty-mouthed hollow
  That's plumb-full of hush to the brim;
I've watched the big, husky sun wallow
  In crimson and gold, and grow dim,
Till the moon set the pearly peaks gleaming,
  And the stars tumbled out, neck and crop;
And I've thought that I surely was dreaming,
  With the peace o' the world piled on top.

"The summer—no sweeter was ever;
  The sunshiny woods all athrill.
The grayling aleap in the river,
  The bighorn asleep on the hill.
The strong life that never knows harness;
  The wilds where the caribou call;
The freshness, the freedom, the farness—
  O God! how I'm stuck on it all."

But as we are to remain in the vicinity of Prince William Sound for a short period, for the purpose of investigating the glories of its scenery, and to study its commercial possibilities, it is found expedient to adjourn the work to the next chapter.

CHAPTER IV.

PRINCE WILLIAM SOUND.

THE WONDERFUL GATEWAY TO ALASKA—MARVELOUS SCENERY ON ALL SIDES—THE NEW TOWN—THE COPPER RIVER ROUTE—ITS MOUNTAINS AND ITS GLACIERS — CORDOVA AND SEWARD — THE JOURNEY TO FAIRBANKS—DISTANCES.

IT is observed that we have made Prince William Sound the first objective point of our travels to and through the Wonderland of Alaska. The reason for this is found in the fact that this wonderful Sound of islands and harbors, with the most thrilling natural scenery in the world surrounding it on all but the ocean side, is the most important gateway to the Great Country. For two or three hundred miles from a common center, its waters provide safe and commodious anchorages, and from these are as many easy passes through the mighty mountain-bound coast to the interior of the country. This great Sound must therefore, in the near future, become, so to speak, a group of prosperous, commercial cities, representative of the wealth of the varied and inexhaustible resources of the broad valleys and many fertile hillsides of the interior portions of the country, and of the vast commerce that soon will spring up on the North Pacific, between Alaska and the other parts of the earth.

It was to this very spot, this wonderful port of destiny, to which fortune led me, on my second trip, years ago, when, bold and dauntless of spirit, I launched my little bark of adventure, the second time, to reach and penetrate the wilds of Alaska in search of whatever fate or good fortune should have in store for me in that country. But a great change has come over Prince William Sound since I first entered it.

But, in some way and from causes then as now unknown to me, I was impressed that this wonderful marine enclosure of many ports and inspiring scenery was possessed of a strong destiny. I felt that if the half which had been told me about the natural wealth hidden in Alaska were true, this wonderful Sound would one day become a multiform port of prosperity; and I strained my eyes in an effort to see as much of it as possible.

I was then, as it were, beginning to develop ideas—ideas of human progress, of commercial and economic developments—and I felt myself breaking out of the pessimistic shell of a narrow domestic life, such as was and still is characteristic of my Eastern birthplace, and entering upon a larger life. My observations of Prince William Sound placed me squarely in the arena of growth. No one can travel from settlement to settlement in this wonderful place, with all the world's most thrilling scenery on one side, with half the natural bounties of the earth just beyond it, and the mighty ocean with its wealth of all varieties of fish at one's feet, or just behind, without being thrilled by a sense of growth. I say that one in this situation, with this grand prospect in mental and physical vision, spontaneously begins to GROW! This growth is in mental breadth and physical intensity. Things at once become larger, greater, grander. The world jumps into bigness in one bound, and the traveler willingly goes along in this strange expansion.

And, so, if the reader can catch the inspirational impulses which I felt on entering and feasting my eyes on this grand prospect, and still feel, he or she certainly will grow also. There is no land on earth which, believe me, will destroy the littleness of one's ambitions, the smallness of one's prospects, like Alaska. It is a big country, and its people begin to grow large in all things which make up manhood and womanhood as soon as they begin to grapple with the industrial and economic problems of the new land.

From Cordova we may steam over to Ellamar, a distance of only fifty-eight miles, which is like a spin of only a few blocks on an eastern city street, when the great extent of this region is considered. From Ellamar to Fort Liscum is but twenty-one miles; from the latter to Valdez, only

ICE BREAKING UP AT FAIRBANKS.

three miles; from Valdez to Latouche is eighty-four miles; from Valdez to Cordova, seventy-seven miles; from Valdez to Ellamar, twenty-four miles; from Latouche to Seward, sixty-two miles; from Seward to Port Graham, one hundred and thirty-seven miles; from Port Graham to Seldovia, sixteen miles; from Seldovia to Kenai, seventy-five miles; from Kenai to Knik, sixty-seven miles; from Seldovia to Homer, fourteen miles; from Ellamar to Landlock, twenty-two miles; and from Landlock to Cordova, fifty miles. And thus we may speed from one town or settlement to another in the great Sound, covering many points, though seeing but little of the wide range of attractions purely local to this section of the Coast.

Believe me, I repeat as is my harmless habit of speech, one cannot examine the character of the coast as it extends into and out from the mountain passes, from Katalla, Cordova, Latouche and Seward, on the Sound, to Seldovia, on the east of the entrance to Cook's Inlet, with a knowledge of the native wealth of the interior of the country in his or her heart, without being impressed that the touring is over a coast section of Alaska, which is now enjoying the dawn of great commercial importance. Its harbors also will become surrounded by vast industrial institutions in a not far away period.

From Cordova we may travel to Chitina on the Copper River Valley & Northern Railroad, and, a year or two later, we may continue the journey over the same road, all the way to Fairbanks. Even at present, we, as already stated, may take the branch line at Chitina and go to Kennicott, where the great Bonanza Copper Mine is located, which is nearly two hundred miles towards the interior from Cordova. From Seward, we very soon may travel by rail, towards the interior, to Knikville and beyond, approaching the valley of the Susitna.

So the reader can see that private enterprise was successfully at work, penetrating the mountain passes of the south coast of Alaska, from Prince William Sound, towards the mighty valleys of the Tanana and the Yukon, with railroad lines, before a beneficent National Government "came to the rescue." What I mean by this expression, "came to the rescue," putting it the way I do, is this: Had not the country been "locked up" by the conservation faddists, and the shortsightedness of a previous federal administration, we should have had a railroad from Prince William Sound to Fairbanks by today, but, inasmuch as the "lid" was put on coal development and railroad construction enterprise, to please our dear friends of the East, stagnation settled upon Alaska, and we were in the throes of painful waiting for transportation facilities, when, at the beginning of 1914, the Federal Government, under the leadership of Franklin K. Lane, Secretary of the Interior, came to the rescue with a grand scheme for a government trunk line.

Now, dear reader, I trust this wise movement will be so managed that it will neither work injustice to those who had progressed so bravely with these private railroad enterprises, nor delay their early completion. But, more of these things later on these pages. I will be pardoned for this diversion here, as, on these travels, we are now face to face with the great problems of transportation, because we must journey from Cordova to Fairbanks, sooner or later, and to all parts of the great interior, and, as we already know, the journey from Chitina to the Tanana must be accomplished behind horses over the government stage road.

And now we may gratify our curiosity, if you please, in making observations of the wonderful scenery of the Prince William Sound region. Here we are in the midst of mighty mountains and awe-inspiring glaciers. Here we may behold dashing cascades, beautiful lakes, towering summits, and watch the advancing glaciers, or amuse ourselves with the sport of fishing or hunting.

As a considerable section of the Copper River & Northwestern Railroad has been completed and opened for traffic, for this year, and probably for next, Cordova, its ocean terminus, will be headquarters for those wishing to reach the interior of Alaska. It is well said that aside from the importance of this route in its connection with the development of the Territory, it already is recognized as the most remarkable scenic line of approach to the great interior valleys. Here, from the Copper River Valley viewpoint, we have Lake McKinley, Lake Eyak and Long Lake, which combine more majestic scenery than can be found anywhere within a like area. Towering above this lower arena arise in the near distance three great elevations—Mt. McKinley, the highest peak in the United States; Mt. Wrangell, recently in active eruption, and Mt. St. Elias, said to be the most picturesque of any mountain in this country. These wonderful monuments of nature rise at the three points of a triangle, proclaiming a welcome to the hosts who are passing them to possess the treasures which lie in the hills and broad valleys at their base, and beyond them to the North, East and West.

As we approach we can see by the use of convenient field glasses that "from their towering slopes trickle countless streams of snow and water, each one of which steadily and gradually increases in volume until it forms an important river." Some of these streams flow into the Copper River, which for nearly two hundred miles swiftly courses down towards the ocean, through a most enchanting defile, with mountains on either side.

At Cordova we are landed from the steamer to the wharf, which itself is the terminus of the railroad. Here we take a train for Child's and Miles Glaciers, which are a little less than fifty miles distant, and where the Copper River is spanned by a fine steel bridge. Child's Glacier is most accessible and, therefore, the one most visited. A short walk takes us from the train to a point where we face this wonderful creation of nature. It impresses us with its power, majesty and splendor.

My reader may behold this wonder by imagining a solid wall of ice rising from the water! It is three miles long, three hundred to five hundred feet in height. Its color is "icy white, with great streaks of turquoise blue." As the water in the river rushes by us, we hear, occasionally, above its soft voices, the noises produced by the falling of great masses of the ice which separate themselves from the main body, and fall into the stream, causing waves to be forced high above the surface. These falling bodies of ice present a most thrilling spectacle and we behold it with awe and amazement.

We have the advantage of visiting this glacier in the summer season when, as we can see, it steadily is moving forward with a continuous booming of noises of falling ice, day and night. The scene is one which those of us who have beheld it never will forget. Those who have not stood before the processes by which it ultimately will disintegrate and dissolve its huge form, from this very brief description will be able to clearly imagine the acting picture which it presents.

The space between these two covers does not permit more than a few observations of the chief attractions of our route to the interior, but I should mention, before leaving the coast, that Cordova, which is a rather notable seaport, is situated on Cordova Bay. It has good hotels, banks and mercantile establishments, as also has Seward, farther to the west. A stopover at Cordova is made interesting by the splendid natural scenery on every hand, and by fishing and hunting in nearby sections of the country.

The Copper River Railroad traverses a district of Alaska rich in mineral wealth throughout. In the McKinley Lake region splendid showings in gold and copper are met with, as also in Abercrombie and Wood Canyons, and for many miles east and west, in the hills, an army of prospectors now are at work prospecting the country. In traveling northwest from Cordova, up the Copper River route and beyond this valley, we pass through the borders of the greatest copper belt of Alaska, and farther into the interior, vast stretches of excellent grazing and agricultural lands are met with and passed.

Over nearly the whole distance we traverse a rich country—a land of great mineral promise and excellent agricultural capabilities. From Chitina, which is one hundred and thirty miles from Cordova, we now make the journey to Fairbanks by rather comfortable stage. The whole distance is only three hundred and ninety-five miles.

The distances of the whole journey follow:

	Miles
Seattle to Cordova (direct)	1,236
Cordova to Chitina	131
Chitina to Copper Center	50
Cordova to Fairbanks	395

The journey from Cordova to Chitina is generally made in the daytime. The train leaves Cordova at 8 a. m., reaching Chitina at about 4 o'clock in the afternoon. From this point we patronize the Orr Stage Company through to Fairbanks. The government road on this section of the journey is fairly good for about six months of the year.

The winter trail from Chitina to Fairbanks covers a distance of three hundred and ten miles and comprehends over twenty-five feeding and resting places. This distance is covered in about fourteen to sixteen days. In the summer season the time occupied is much less, and the trip may now be made with considerable ease. Indeed, it is resolved, for parties who know how to travel, to a pleasure trip of surpassing interest. This is the proper route to take to reach the central portion of the interior of Alaska.

CHAPTER V.

MY FIRST YEAR IN NOME.

From 'Frisco to Seattle and Nome—Air Castles, Ice Floes, Snow Storms and Hardships—Cabin Life at Nome—The "First Boat" and the "Last Boat"—Fury of the Nome Winter—Tunneling Out of One's Cabin—Neighborhood Gossip Through Stove Pipes from Snow Bank Summits.

A POINT has been reached in this effort at which we shall combine travel and observation with a discussion of the economics of material progress in Alaska. The effort will be to construct upon the foundations already laid, and to be laid, such a superstructure—such a picture of Alaska—as will present to the reader who mentally travels and observes with me, as will compress the whole vast country, its resources and possibilities, its people and its industries, and all its belongings, into one continuous panorama of inspiring scenery and incident.

Nearly ten years ago I discovered myself in an effort to solve the problem of Alaska. I had arrived at San Francisco with my husband, when as yet I was little more than a girl. We had reached the Pacific West in youth, impelled by a desire to carve out a fortune in all its aspects which could contribute to our happiness and usefulness. Our home life had been such that we both were imbued with a spirit of thrift, a well developed determination to succeed in the true meaning of success; and were prepared to endure such hardships, and to exert ourselves in such a way as to fully earn a victory.

I had seen circulars and booklets at the steamship offices upon which the word "Alaska!" was printed in bold type, and was attracted by their contents. I said to Mr. Mallinson: "What is the meaning of all this excitement about Alaska? Let's go to the steamship offices and investigate."

"Oh," he replied, "these people have gone wild about the gold fields of the North. They claim there is a place called Nome, in Alaska, on the coast of Bering Sea, where you can find gold in the sand on the beach, but it all sounds like a frost to me. We had better be going to our room."

"Nothing of the sort," I replied, somewhat forcibly. "Let's go into the steamboat offices, and learn more about it." So saying I made a dash for one of the entrances, and my husband yielded to my wishes and came along with me. The crowd was large, but in respect to my sex, the people gave way, and I pressed my way into the office, through the excited throng, with Mr. Mallinson a close follower.

Now I was possessed by a feeling or spirit that gave to my actions a business air, and I asked the first clerk who gave me attention:

"What's all this excitement about the Alaska gold fields?"

"Well," says he, "I'm here to tell you, Miss. There is a stampede up North. Were you thinking of going?" Meanwhile he surveyed me from head to feet, evidently thinking I was not fit for such an expedition. No doubt I appeared to him to be quite young, and not very robust. Hence, I made haste to inform him that I had a newly married, full-fledged husband somewhere in the crowd. Turning round, I found Mr. Mallinson close at hand. They took up the conversation, and several inquiries were hurriedly made and as quickly answered.

Then we marched out and as soon as the open air was reached, I said:

"Let's go!"

He responded without hesitation:

"Yes, we'll go!"

It was all done and settled about as quickly as I am telling it. We immediately came to Seattle, where we found the excitement more intense than at 'Frisco. Everyone in Seattle was talking about Nome and Alaska. More than this, many people were exhibiting gold nuggets and dust in the steamship office windows, and hundreds were crowding round to feast their eyes upon the yellow metal.

Mr. Mallinson bought two tickets for Nome,—$100 each. And we went North—went with one large grip only. It contained the barest necessities for us two.

I shall never forget the day we started. Thousands were gathered on the dock to witness our departure. The crowds shouted "good luck" at us, and many exclaimed: "I hope you'll strike it rich."

But amongst the throngs, there was not a person we knew to personally wish us well, but for some strange reason, we felt quite jubilant in ourselves. I was just then very busy building large, towering air castles in my mind, which for the time being appeared to materialize. This cheered me on. But, alas! Little did I know what was before us! Little did I dream how quickly they all would fade and dissolve!

It appears to be true that most people must endure a liberal supply of hard knocks and afflicting bumps before they realize the "brain-turning pay streak." Well, we left Seattle in the last week of May. Everything went pretty well until we got within two days of Nome. Here we met with ice floes, which extended as far as the eye could reach. Our steamship, called the James Dollar, was compelled to push her nose very slowly through the openings and weak places of those "congregated packs of ice." Then it was that our vessel moved forward so slowly that the question with us was whether she was really making headway or not. One passenger aptly observed: "She is only smelling her way."

I shall never forget those ice packs. Some crude formations were standing on end, up in mid-air; others were linked or joined together, or clinched in one another's embrace, like monster polar bears engaged in combat. Others presented a scene of floating clouds, because of their wonderful whiteness; and I felt as I looked upon these displays of nature as if they were clouds which had lost their hold on the sky, and had dropped into Bering Sea, there to be at the mercy of the cold, turbulent waters.

They did not, however, hesitate to grind up against the prow and sides of our ship. In these terrible pranks, they did not behave as clouds at all, but as menacing aggregations of solid ice, which appeared to threaten our safety. They would turn over and over and take awful plunges at the vessel's sides, rising again to mock our despairing hopes.

Grinding their ugly bodies together, they seemed to gnash their teeth at us, as if bent on our destruction. But, believe me, dear reader, there was beauty in all this terror. It is good for me that I can see the beautiful side of such displays of power. They gave us splendid displays of color, becoming intensely white at the surface, and growing to a beautiful green as they lifted their huge forms high above the waters.

These ice packs shimmered in the fierce sunlight, until our eyes were forced to turn away for relief. The days were now bright and hot. But after long, vexatious, weary, threatening days, our brave steamer left these floes behind and passed into open water. We then discovered ourselves in the bay, above Norton Sound, and beheld Nome scattered all along the shore line. Our approach to this metropolis of Seward Peninsula was on a lovely Sunday morning.

All were now preparing to go ashore by lighterage. We made the landing actually on sand, and we walked upon it, feeling that we were upon a carpet of gold. I remember that as we did so, one Irishman of the party said to another, as he picked up a handful of this sand: "Be gorra, they said it was full of gold, and didn't I tell ye it was all a fake?" "Give us a chance, Mike," was the subdued reply.

And thus we marched up to Front street, where a vast variety of hungry dogs were congregated in groups, in almost every direction one happened to look. The dogs have their vacation in the summer time. The scene was odd enough to be sure. There were groups of rather rough looking, sturdy men of all types, and many nationalities; and there were curious looking miners with costly Stetson hats, and blue flannel shirts, and blue denim overalls, and rubber boots, and with nugget chains festooned across their vests, looking strong enough to hold down a span of mules.

But these were real gold nuggets, taken, for the most part, from claims owned and operated by those who wore them.

Yes, and there were women, too, on this memorable Front street, who had come out to greet their friends from the boat which had just arrived. I must add this here, that our arrival was on the first boat of the season and, believe me, the arrival of the "first boat" is a great event at Nome, even to this day. The event signalizes the opening of navigation, and the arrival of a fresh supply of such foods as have to be brought in from the States. It means new clothes to wear, —all the latest styles for the ladies—and gay times for the remainder of the season.

But the arrival of new faces from Seattle and other points of civilization was not the only feature of the event. Many who took part in welcoming the newcomers were packed and ready to leave on the same boat for the "Big Outside." Among these were some who had "made a stake," and were about to return to civilization with their big finds of gold. These were the happiest of all the lot. They were longing for a change and a rest from their strenuous life in the North, and from the long, dreary winter which had only just taken its leave of Nome.

But we, the newcomers, entertained ourselves walking the long street and viewing nugget jewelry and photos of Alaska in the store windows. There also were curios of many varieties, but I have no space for a description of these. There was much to see and lots to interest us. Not anything, however, aroused our interest more unpleasantly than the size of the bill which was presented to Mr. Mallinson at the conclusion of our lunch. But of this we said never a word, because to complain would be to advertise oneself as of the tenderfoot class. One cannot safely complain of high prices where gold is as plentiful as chicken feed.

But we soon found that "up in Nome," one not only pays high prices for what he or she eats or wears, but receives a big wage for his day's work. These new conditions quickly change one's attitude towards the country and its people, so it will be only a few days before one will be slamming down a dollar for a nickel article without feelings of regret.

We kept moving up and down town for days, which is about the same as going up and down the beach, watching the boys at work; and most of them were washing up good pay. They told us how their wives and children used to take out dishpans, after their housework was over, and pan for gold, and realize hundreds of dollars in their little cleanups each evening.

When I heard these stories I thought I had been "asleep at the switch" all my life. But I remembered that it never is too late to begin. Our first day seemed long to me, but the sun was still shining quite high in the sky, and I began to think. Then I asked my husband for the time. He told me that it was eleven o'clock in the evening.

"Oh, glory! It's no wonder I am tired," was my response. I had not till then realized I was in the land of the midnight sun. We rested, sleeping a little now and then, during our first night in Nome, in a tent on the sand. It was my first experience in roughing it. We crawled out about six o'clock in the morning, and found the sun shining from a point about as high in the heavens as when we retired, except that it appeared in another quarter of the sky.

On the following day we secured a cabin, and Mr. Mallinson, better known as Ben, from that time on, found work, and I soon was kept busy baking bread, pies and cakes for the nearby miners. And so the summer passed. Then nearly all the people in Nome and the nearby creeks began to talk about the "last boat." The last boat is a very different event from the first one. It means a dreary long nine months of loneliness, during which the sun shines less and less each day until its return trip begins. The weather becomes colder and colder. The water freezes solid in the sluice boxes, mining goes to sleep, and the ice makes over Bering Sea for the winter. It is about the end of October that winter comes to stay, until the days are reduced to about three hours of skylight. Later they begin to lengthen.

When I first visited Nome anyone in that place

IN THE SNOW.

MRS. MALLINSON AND HER O. D. O. CLUB.

possessing a coal oil lamp was supposed to be very well to do. It would need to be lighted at 2 p. m., refilled about 9 p. m., and would be required to run until 11 o'clock the following day. From that hour, there would be sufficient daylight for trimming the lamp, sweeping the cabin and washing your hands and face, so that one can be assured by the daylight that they were clean. Then it will be full time to light the lamp again.

In Nome of a winter it is colder than in most any other place, because the wind that blows from over Bering Sea is sharp enough to cut one in two. It has a full sweep on the town. There is nothing whatever to break its force, because the settlement is built along the coast. The hills fall away as you go back from the shore, so that the snow will cover the dwellings in a single night. If one didn't exercise the forethought to keep the shovels inside the house over night, they could not be found in the morning, and such person would have to burrow himself out.

I remember one day we had a fearful snow storm the night before, and when I got up in the morning, snow was all I could see against the windows. After a while I saw a dog's face looking at me through the window. He had scented our cabin and had pawed away enough snow to reveal his body against the glass. Then Ben opened the door to find a wall of snow higher than the cabin. So he had to tunnel himself out for several yards, and when he got to the top of the snow he found our cabin completely covered. One looking towards our location from a little distance would not know there was a cabin in existence, except for the smoke rising through the snow. This was not an uncommon experience. It frequently occurred in bad snowstorms in Nome that one could locate his neighbor's cabin only by the smoke; and the snow was packed so hard that one could walk over it mountains high, and shout down the stove pipe to the boys below. In this way stove pipe communications were frequent. It was the doom of any one who was caught out in these terrible snowstorms. You probably have heard about persons taking shelter in a reindeer skin sleeping bag in a big snow storm. Believe me, it is a hard experience, but it has been gone through with on the trail. One danger is that one perspires so greatly while in the bag that his clothes become wet with perspiration, and he is liable, on crawling out, to freeze to death from the cold before he can reach a shelter where he can dry himself. Many a man has lost his life in this manner, his body having been found when the snow melts in the spring, possibly close to a roadhouse, or a cabin.

In a race to reach a gold location in advance of other prospectors often take great risks in this respect, and consign their bodies to a snowy grave.

Here's to the icy Northland,
  With hills all covered with snow,
Where many a man has lost his life
  Not knowing where to go.
For when a blizzard blows in your face,
  You cannot see your way,
But you stumble on until you drop,
  A frozen lump of clay.

In the long winter evenings at Nome, the boys (men) play cards away into the long night, telling tales and swapping yarns of their boyhood days, as well as of their intentions for the future. The ladies visit each other, the absence of deep snow and intense cold permitting, and they do lots of fancy work, if they happen to be supplied with the materials. Their housework, as you readily will understand, is not very laborious in a one-room cabin, with only one four-pane window, and a bed in one corner, and the table nailed to the wall under the window sill, and the grub piled up, box upon box, in the other corner—a few calendars tacked up here and there upon the black log walls.

The curtains at the window made from sugar sacks, the same as the pillow slips, constitute the features of a prospector's cabin. But the boys did not spend all their time in the cabins, or the places of resort and amusement, during the long, cold winters at Nome. A majority of them were a great part of the time out on the creeks, thawing and hoisting dirt, and raising their dumps for the spring clean-ups.

If from this true picture of a few phases of winter life in Nome appears to breathe a spirit of severity, it should be here stated, in advance of what is to follow, of the brighter side, that grand colorations of persistent hope and courage run through it, so that after facing the trials and the hardships of a long, dreary winter in that place, and enjoying a portion of two of its summers, I can sing with Esther Birdsall Darling, to the tune of "Up in Alaska," as follows:

"The snow is nowhere quite so white
As in Alaska;
And nowhere shine the stars so bright
As in Alaska;
The days are nowhere quite so gray,
The nights are nowhere quite so gay,
For heaven's forgot and hell's to pay
Up in Alaska.

* * * *

And when we've left this barren shore
Up in Alaska,
Perchance to come to Nome no more,
Up in Alaska;
We'll often say: 'Here's one on me,'
To those old friends on Bering Sea,
Good luck to all—where they may be
Up in Alaska."

CHAPTER VI.

THE PRICE OF GOLD.

Terrors of Nome Industry—The Cold Winters and the Faithful Dogs—Nome Placer Mining Methods—Rich Rewards and Awful Tribute to the Saloon and the Dance Hall—Terrors of Fishing on the Ice on Bering Sea—The Lure of Fairbanks—Nome of Today.

DURING my first and only winter at Nome, I received my first lessons in placer mining. As these experiences demand some attention, I am forced to curtail the space which otherwise would have been given to accommodate a longer account of domestic life in that far north settlement.

Our church-going expeditions in the winter months, in furs and wraps, in bold dashes against snow and cold would probably not have been carried on with such zeal and force as they were, had we been left to no other incentives but the prayer and the sermon; the singing did much to bring the people together in the name of worship.

The winters are the working seasons for the dogs, and you may see a dog train, small or great, almost wherever you behold the snow, and, of course, that is in any direction one happens to look. The fuel is hauled, the grub is transported from place to place; miners are conveyed to and from their claims on the creeks; the women are taken to town and home again; the physician makes his rounds; the preachers make their pastoral visits; the wood is hauled for thawing at the claims and the dumps—indeed almost everything in the transportation line is achieved by dogs.

Nome is a city of dogs. It boasts of the best dogs and more of them than any other place in all Alaska. Nome is the home of Baldy and all the really famous dogs of the Northland. Nome is the home of world-famous dog team races, and the people there know how to appreciate their dogs, because in Esther Birdsall Darling's little volume of poems called "Up in Alaska," it is well said:

"For we're proud o' the way the men and the dogs
Come through all the hardships they face,
When they speed four hundred and eight long miles
In this wonderful Northern race.

"Five times the Kennel Club green and gold
Has fluttered so bright and gay,
And each team's colors has decked its friends
On our April Racing Day."

As winter begins to decline and spring manifests its dawn in Nome, out on the creeks you can see dumps of dirt reposing here and there at every turn. These dumps are the dirt which the boys hoist out during the winter. If you are just prospecting and taking out your first dump, you naturally go slow and easy, probably on account of having insufficient money to open up on a large scale, that is by the use of machinery, and a large crew of miners. But you wish to see what kind of ground you have, so you prospect first, it may be, by two or three men together, and often finding pay.

You hoist this dirt by a windlass and bucket, and dump it all in a pile. In the spring when the snow melts and the water runs, the ice breaks up, you thaw out this frozen dump with steam pipes connected to your boiler. These are about inch pipes, and about twelve feet long, several being joined together, to a length to reach your dump. Then you turn on steam for two or three days and nights, according to the size of your dump, until it all is thawed. Then you shovel it into your sluice boxes, which are twelve feet long, two feet wide, with riffles in the bottom.

These riffles are little poles stripped of their bark, some four or five being placed together and held firm by a piece of wood at each end. These are made to fit the sluice box at the bottom. As the poles are round there are small spaces between them. Through these spaces the gold passes as the dirt is carried along by the water passing through the boxes. The boxes are placed end to end in a long string, so that what does not pass through in the first box is carried down in the second, and so on, and the rocks and coarser dirt are carried on to the end and out to the rock pile. After two or three days' run, these riffles are taken up and washed, because colors are liable to hang to them. Then all the gold and dirt are taken up to the top box, and about one-third of a sluice head of water is let on slowly, so as gently to wash away the remaining dirt. Then, there is your gold, yellow and bright. You take this up in your gold pan, by brushing it into a little scoop. Then when it is in the pan you put it on the stove and dry it, stirring it now and then with a fork, until it is dry. It is now ready to blow out the black sand. This done, the clean-up is finished.

You spread papers all over the table to catch the black sand, and you will get about two ounces of gold from each paper of sand. Then you bring out your gold scales and weigh all the gold, take it to the bank or mint and get your coin.

Now, you probably have determined the value of your ground. Say it goes a dollar to the pan of dirt, for example, you can well afford to put on machinery and open up your drift large enough to handle a crew of men, and a 60-horsepower boiler, and an engine to correspond. Then you get a self-dumping bucket. This saves labor. It is hard work, and one needs plenty of beans and bacon to keep it up.

Now you obtain a large pole, like a telegraph pole, or larger, and to this you attach guide lines of inch thick cable wire and fasten them down at various points distant from the lower end of the pole. When the pole has been firmly fixed in a vertical position over the shaft, the bucket is suspended for automatic operation, and you are equipped for taking out dirt rapidly.

When these dumps are equipped with modern machinery, and you can behold them like a forest for miles in every direction, and when you realize that each dump contains thousands of dollars waiting to be sluiced out, the spring time in Nome becomes a most thrilling prospect. It is a scene to be long remembered. But there is a sad part to this wonderful picture. It is a feature I dislike to speak about. Believe me, that of a hundred of such dumps, containing each, say, $5,000 or $500,000 in all, probably, in a majority of cases, one-half finds its way to the saloons and the dance halls of the camp.

This is the sad part of my picture. The boys work mighty hard to dig and clean up this gold. They brave many hardships and dangers to discover it, and in a great many instances the fruits of all this labor and exposure are thrown away upon the poison which destroys both body and mind. But, dear reader, after all, this is not to be deplored more than that other terrible example of toiling to plow, harrow and seed the ground, and then to appropriate the proceeds of the crop in the same way. The one is six and the other half a dozen. The people will take their choice, and I do not know that the saloon of the mining camp gets more in proportion than the brothel of civilization.

It is about as sad in one case as in the other, with the weight of excuses, so far as it can be considered, on the side of the miners. But all mining men do not sacrifice their lives in this way.

I must relate an account of one of our Nome winter fishing expeditions on the ice of Bering Sea. This one was organized by myself. To give the reader an idea of the dangers of these outings, let me say that there is more than the fierce, cold, below fifty wind to face and to endure. When a party is out on the ice three or five miles from shore, a warm southwest wind may be met with. This weakens the ice along the lines of its great cracks, or crevices, and when the wind shifts to the proper quarter, it may drive square miles of this ice further out to sea, or southwestward, carrying those who happen to be fishing on one of these areas along with it.

Unless constant watch is kept, a party may find itself unconsciously carried miles beyond its supposed location, with a wide stretch of open sea between it and the shore. This may take place without the notice of any one in the party.

One fine day at my invitation, a party of ladies, three besides myself, with a crack dog train, started for the ice. We had gone but about three or four miles from shore when we came to some fishing holes, which had been cut through the ice about fourteen feet to the water. We then began operations, sinking our baited hooks and lines, which were suspended from long poles, into the water, and fishing in the usual style. It was unsafe to approach too near these holes because to slip into one would be the end of life for the person being thus unfortunate. So we kept back, with great caution, to protect our lives, and when we felt a bite, we took good care not to become more excited over the sport than we were fearful of the danger. We landed our fish in a state of "fear and trembling," as well as shivering from the cold, but we were all "game sports," as the boys call it, and held to our work, until I had a gunny sack pretty well filled with excellent fish. However, they were frozen like sticks nearly as soon as they were landed.

Now and then we cast an eye along our alignment of objects towards the shore to see if the ice were moving, when, of a sudden, I noticed that all was not right. I did not yell! Believe me, I am not that kind of sand. I spoke quietly to the dogs and got them hitched up. They were as anxious to go home as we were, but for a very different reason.

My lady friends noticed the procedure and began to inquire:

"What's the matter? What has happened? Is there danger?"

"Nothing has happened, nothing is the matter, there is no danger,'" I assured them, "but you just pile onto this sled mighty quick," and onto the sled we all got in quick time, and I cracked my whip in the bravery of a soldier, and you should have seen those dogs going. They appeared to scent danger from the start, and became restless, yelping and frisking and scratching the ice with their paws, so that when they heard the word "mush!" and felt the keen lash, they started off like racers of the course. And, believe me, they knew the trail to a dot and they knew my voice as well.

We went over the three or four miles which separated us from the shore like a gray streak of lightning, so to speak, us four women hanging on and holding to our fish with the sporting spirit now ebbing in our hearts. But every now and then the sharp crack of my whip sent the fire of courage to the hearts of my companions, as I shouted:

"We are safe, all right! Don't be afraid!" We soon were safe on the snow-clad land, and the dogs yelped and gnashed their teeth for joy. One of the ladies of my party said to me:

"God bless you, Mrs. Mallinson, you are not very large of stature, but you're a giant of courage! What's the matter?" For a fact, not one of my party knew for a certainty what the flurry was all about. So we looked back over the track which we had made to see the ice moving, and to behold black streaks in the distance, indicating the presence of water. We had made a narrow escape.

Well, when we had been in Nome about a year the "first boat" came again, and having heard great reports of the new gold discoveries at Fairbanks, we decided to try our luck in the interior of Alaska. We packed up, boarded the Discovery, and were soon at St. Michael, where, later, we took the river steamer for the voyage up the Yukon.

Before leaving Nome, I am, according to the plan of this volume, to tell you something about this metropolis of the Seward Peninsula, and the wild Northland in which it is located. Nome is a vast district rather than a compact city and may be said to include the whole of the Seward Peninsula. It includes such important subdistricts as Council, Solomon, Topkuk, Kugarok, Teller, Deering, Keewalik and the Kowak and Noatak Rivers.

Historically speaking, gold was discovered in the beds of creeks near where the town of Nome afterwards was built, in 1899, and the stampede ensuing in 1900 from the Klondike and other places carried about 25,000 gold hungry prospectors to the region. Probably a majority of those who first visited the place returned disappointed. The then known gold area was small and but a few were able to find pay ground worth staking. At the start not a great number were possessed of the means or the energy to explore the country to a very wide extent. They could not safely venture too far from the base of supplies in search of new ground.

Many claims were staked and restaked, resulting in a period of bitter litigation. This precipitated the camp into more than a year of conflict. But the place made good and for some time produced about $7,000,000 annually in gold. Of course the sensationally rich finds soon were exhausted. For the past five years dredging has been resorted to in order to recover the gold from the lower grade gravel deposits. This method has been, for the greater part, quite successful, so much so that a large number of dredging plants have been installed. One or two quartz mines have been discovered and are being operated.

The city of Nome is unattractive, and the climate, in the long winters is almost insufferably cold with excessive snowfalls. It is located on the beach line of Bering Sea, and is backed by a great level stretch of unwooded marsh, known as "tundra." The town contains one main street about a mile in length, bordered on both sides by frame and corrugated iron buildings, erected during the "boom" period of the place, when building material was scarce, and there was no time to formulate a plan for a city.

However, Nome has pretty good hotels, an electric light plant, an excellent water supply and a wireless telegraph station. Its immediate future, commercially, depends upon a better success of the prospector and miner than has been awarded to them during the last few years, so that I must now think of the town in the sentiments which the last stanza of Sam C. Dunham's poem, entitled "The Men Who Blaze the Trail," inspires:

"So while others sing of the chosen few
  Who o'er the fates prevail,
I will sing of the many, staunch and true,
  Whose brave hearts never quail—
Who with dauntless spirit of pioneers
A state are building for the coming years,
Their sole reward their loved ones' tears,—
  The men who blaze the trail!"

CHAPTER VII.

GOING UP THE YUKON.

Two Mighty Rivers—The Yukon and the Kuskokwim—The Kuskokwim Valley the Future Garden of Alaska—Preparing for the Yukon Journey—Smuggling the Dog and Cat—How Mrs. Mallinson Won the Freight on Her Stove—Excursions up the Innoko and the Iditarod—Mining Above the Arctic Circle—Excursion up the Koyukuk—Mining at Coldfoot—Ruby—Nulato.

OF the many great rivers of Alaska, two, the Yukon and the Kuskokwim, are pre-eminently mighty. The first flows from Eastern Alaska to Bering Sea, winding through the vast country on a course 2,300 miles long; the second finds its sources in Mt. Estelle and Mt. McKinley, and courses through a wonderful land, until it reaches Bering Sea at the head of Kuskokwim Bay, which is near to the 162nd meridian of longitude and not far to the north of the 61st degree of north latitude. For a considerable portion of its route it, in some measure, parallels the Yukon.

WINNING TEAM ALL-ALASKA SWEEPSTAKES.

But little, comparatively, is known of the valleys and basins of the Kuskokwim and its tributaries, although this second greatest river of Alaska is navigable for eight hundred miles from its mouth. Several hundred prospectors now are at work in the valleys of this great river, and while there are no reports at hand that notable gold discoveries have been made, the outlook is said to be very encouraging.

Unlike the valley of the Yukon, that of the Kuskokwim is not perpetually frozen, but carries much water. This circumstance presages much for its agricultural capabilities, which are said to be very great. Passing up the Kuskokwim, the first town met with by either of the two steamers of the Northern Navigation Company plying on its waters is Bethel. The other settlements as one ascends with their distances from this point are given in another part of this volume.

The climate of the Kuskokwim Valley, and that of its tributaries, covering as it does nearly one quarter of the arable lands of Alaska, probably is much more desirable than that of the great Yukon system. Vegetation of all kinds is plentiful, timber is abundant and, so far as investigation has gone, the soil is better adapted to agricultural pursuits than in most any other sections of the country. The harbor approach at the mouth of the river is similar to conditions in that respect existing at the mouth of the Yukon. At both places a lighterage system is necessary, and much inconvenience is experienced in effecting transshipments of passengers and freight.

From the information at hand, which, however, is incomplete, it may be predicted that the great Kuskokwim country, located in southwestern Alaska, with its excellent climate is to become the garden of The Great Country. Many of its important capabilities place it high in the scale of future possibilities. There appears to be no reason why it may not become the greatest stock raising section of Alaska. One day in the not very distant future, the land of the Kuskokwim will be occupied by more than a million farmers.

From these observations it is seen that Alaska is, as yet, but partly explored. Should rich gold and other valuable mineral deposits be found in this seçtion of the country, which is more than probable, it will become thickly populated in a short time, and this influx of population will give to its agricultural interests a wonderful impetus.

Of course the Kuskokwim is one of the natural highways from the Bering Sea section of the Pacific Ocean to the interior portions of Alaska, and, although in this system of travels, we are not to bodily pass into the country by that route, we may mentally do so, before entering upon our interesting voyage up the Yukon from Bering Sea.

Eight hundred miles of voyaging up the Kuskokwim carry us in turn, to Bethel, to Toolicsok, to Yukón Portage, to Kolmakofsky, to Georgetown, to Sleitmute, to Andranoff, to McGrath and to Tocotna Forks. The latter is 520 miles from Bethel, and leads us into a system of headwater streams which find their source in Mt. McKinley, which is in the very center of Alaska. From this plateau one is close to the headwaters of the streams which flow into the Susitna, and other waters which have their outlet in Cook Inlet. Thus, the future importance of the Kuskokwim Valley as a future route of travel in Alaska at once is seen.

The reader should here again consult the map of Alaska, in order to see that, in the system of travel and observation adopted in this work, we are connecting the Yukon, the Kuskokwim, the Koyukuk, the Susitna, the Copper, and the Upper Yukon Valleys in such a way as to give us one great connected view of the whole of Alaska. This is the comprehensive plan I have adopted to familiarize the reader with the whole of the mighty Northland, south of the Endicott Range, or south of Arctic Alaska, in one system of travel. I trust the effort will at least be appreciated by the reader.

We now will return to St. Michael and begin our voyage up the great Yukon River. It will be remembered that we came over from Nome to this place on the Discovery for the purpose of journeying up the Yukon and the Tanana to Fairbanks, for the reason that, at the latter place, we had been told that remarkable discoveries of gold had been made.

The boat that was to carry us up the Yukon was not completed, and we were delayed three days before the start. So we put up our tent. Yes, we had our own tent, by this time, and we erected it on the nice green tundra, a little way from the beach, let the cat out of the bag, where we had kept it hidden from the scrutiny of the steamer officials, and turned the dog loose, and were as happy as could be. This was because our troubles had not begun.

On the third day the Northern Navigation Company notified all hands that they would be ready to start next day. So Ben—Ben is my husband—went at once to the office to get our tickets and to check our baggage. The officials passed the big box all right, but when they ran up against the Yukon stove there was a kick. The baggage man said it was too heavy to go on our tickets. He wanted ONLY $20 extra. Ben wanted to throw the stove away. The baggage man said, "No!" and my husband began to investigate and found the oven solidly packed with cook pots. The fire box also was filled with small but needful utensils. No wonder it was overweight. Of course I was the guilty party, and Ben came post-haste after me. Then I was up against it. I sought the baggage man, and he asked:

"Is this your stove?"

"Yes," I replied, "it is my stove."

He wanted to know what I was going to do about it.

"Well," said I, "I have come up to talk it over with you to see if you can't help me a bit. You see it's like this," I said. "We haven't any too much money, and we don't know how much we will need when we get to Fairbanks, and I'd hate to leave that stove behind, for I might have to depend on that stove for a living, and what can a woman do if you take away her stove in a new mining camp?"

"I see," said the baggage man. "You've got a fine stove all right, but you don't look able to cook, —to make a living as a cook."

"No," I agreed, "maybe I don't, but I wish to be prepared for emergencies."

"Well, you are a great kid," he said, "and have a big pile of grit. That's what this country needs. Just run along about your business, and I'll see that that stove goes, if the boat goes. Hear that?"

I told him how thankful I was and ventured to say that the country also needed more men of his kind, too, and that if ever I met him in Fairbanks I'd make him a batch of doughnuts, or a pie, in proof of my appreciation.

I went straight back and told Ben Mallinson of the success of his wife, and I said: "Now Ben, never tell me that my talking gets me nothing, for in this case, my long-drawn-out pow-wow has saved us $20."

Ben laughed and was much pleased, and I felt a foot taller. Believe me, folks, after that when Mr. Mallinson wanted a favor, he nearly always put his case in my hands, and I as frequently succeeded.

Next day we packed up, and the cat in bag and pup in arms, we boarded the boat, which, although not yet finished, bore her name, the Tanana. We managed to float along and that was about all. But the workmen came with us and continued on the job, working day and night. Of course we could not go to bed until they put up doors to our rooms.

Now, there were but three women in the party, —myself and two others. One, like myself, had her husband with her, the other was by herself. We three had to sleep in a room together until the boat could boast a further advance towards completion. The men had to sleep on deck, or on tables, or in any places they could find. They did not relish this any the more because they had each to pay $100 for "first class" passage. But the boys didn't kick much so long as the steamer kept going.

Each new day showed new improvements and progress on the boat until it was completed. We had little to do but to watch the shores of the Yukon. For the most part it was like steaming round one great mountain only to meet with another, covered with rich and deep green spruce trees. The grand scenery looked cool and refreshing, and the splendid trees bowed their pretty heads in the breeze to welcome and cheer us as we passed.

To the right and to the left were endless chains of mountains, thickly populated with green timber. They looked so strong and majestic, towering skyward, that one could not behold the endless scene without feelings of rapture for the solitude imposed. Here, in the homeland of an endless variety of fur and other wild animals, one is impressed by the peaceful nature of the surroundings. At the time of which I am writing, no evidences were to be seen of the presence of white people. It was the beginning of travel on this mighty river, and we all felt that we were, indeed, pioneers in a far away land—far distant from the haunts of civilization.

Each turn of the river brought us to a new scene—a new prospect—more interesting than the one passed. Now we looked upon a view where three tributaries appeared to meet to augment the body of water which we were leaving behind, and then we would be given a new lease of distance by a turn in our course. At the mouth of tributaries, soundings often would be made to detect the presence of flats or shoals, or sand bars, and possibly a change of course would be ordered to avoid them. At different points parties would be sent to shore to take on wood. Our pup was enjoying some liberty on the barge that we pushed ahead of the boat and kitty was having a good time with the engineer in the boiler room. Thus, on and on we went our way, often for long stretches with nothing more awakening than the splashes of salmon to disturb our course. It was easy enough to obtain fish as we journeyed along.

An Indian village now and then came into view, and we entertained ourselves with their curious features. Ingoing people buy little from the Indians, while those traveling to the outside generally obtain many of their curios.

Whenever we came in sight of the bed of a departed creek, the prospector would rub his hands, one over the other, and long to test it for gold with his pick, shovel and pan. By the way, this is precisely how new gold discoveries are made.

Thus we press forward up the Yukon, passing Andreafsky, Russian Mission and on to Holy Cross, a distance of three hundred and fifty-eight miles. We then may pass up the Innoko to the mouth of the Iditarod, a distance of one hundred and sixty miles, and thence up the latter to the towns of Dikeman and Iditarod, a distance of three hundred and fifty and about four hundred and twenty-five miles from Holy Cross, respectively. Gold was discovered at Iditarod in 1909, which caused a considerable stampede from neighboring localities. The principal mines are on Otter and Flat Creeks. The season of 1911 demonstrated that the placer ground there, although not of great extent, is rich. That year's output amounted to $3,500,000. At this place bedrock is near the surface, and mining is by "open cut," which can be carried on only in the summer season. It is believed that the vast network of creeks in this neighborhood will prove rich placer ground for years to come. It is estimated that about 2,500 persons are now in the district prospecting.

Nulato is six hundred and ten miles up the Yukon from St. Michael, and Koyukuk is twenty miles further. At this point the Koyukuk River flows into the Yukon. This stream is navigable for light craft for six hundred and twenty miles to Wiseman. The distance to Bettles is five hundred and twenty miles. Bettles is the supply post for the Koyukuk District. Gold was produced in this neighborhood to the amount of $250,000 in 1911. Gold was discovered in this district in 1892, on Tramway, Frying Pan and other river bars, about thirty miles above the present location of Bettles, which is considerably above the Arctic Circle. It was not until 1896 that a trading post was established in the district. The most important mining operations are at Coldfoot, sixty miles further up the river. As Bettles is at the head of steamboat navigation, supplies are freighted to Coldfoot in small boats. Recent rich discoveries have been made on Nolan Creek, not far from Coldfoot. It looks now as if the Koyukuk will assume an important place among the rich placer camps of Alaska.

Only the hardiest miners operate in this district, because it is remote and comparatively in-accessible, the only vessels capable of ascending the extremely shallow river being the Northern Navigation Company's light draft steamers, which draw only twenty inches loaded. These vessels, however, manage to transport sufficient supplies to amply stock the Northern Commercial Company's store, which is the mainstay of men operating in the vicinity.

"During 1909 the company established a new station at Wiseman, at the confluence of Wiseman Creek and Koyukuk River, a few miles above Coldfoot. The advantage to operators of a post so near to the creeks is obvious."

Having covered the country both north and south of the Yukon from St. Michael to Holy Cross and beyond, we may now resume our journey towards Fairbanks and Dawson. Our present departure point is Koyukuk. From this it is not a great distance to Ruby, which is but one hundred and seventy-five miles below Tanana. It was established in 1911. It is the center of the mining district of the same name. Here extensive prospecting has been carried on. The district promises to become an extensive and profitable mining camp.

Nulato, the great Indian village, which we already have passed and noted as the point where the light draft river steamers of the American Yukon Navigation Company are taken for points on the Koyukuk River, is the home of one of the largest herds of reindeer belonging to the national government in Alaska. It is noted in this connection, that my trip to the Outside in the fall of 1913 was down the Yukon. It gives an account of many attractions not referred to in this journey to the "Inside."

Tanana on the Yukon is located at the confluence of the Tanana River with the Yukon, and is one of the most beautiful locations on this mighty river. At this place the Yukon River steamers follow the Tanana River up to Fairbanks, or on the main stream, on to Dawson and the Upper Yukon.

No one can travel up the Yukon to this point, without getting a grasp on the bigness of The Great Country, and without almost spontaneously repeating the lines of Robert W. Service in "The Spell of the Yukon," where he says:

"The Summer—no sweeter was ever;
  The sunshiny woods all athrill;
The grayling asleep in the river,
  The bighorn asleep on the hill.
The strong life that never knows harness;
  The wilds where the caribou call;
The freshness, the freedom, the farness,—
  O God! how I'm stuck on it all."

CHAPTER VIII.

LIFE AT FAIRBANKS.

Building Our First Cabin—Getting a Home of Our Own—Sky-High Prices—The Glories of the Sunsets—Scenes in the Heavens and in the Saloons and Dance Halls—Mr. Mallinson Stakes His First Claim—The Log Church—On a Stampede With Dog Trains—The Northern Lights—Packing Gold From the Creeks to the Bank.

WHEN we have finished our journey to Fairbanks from Tanana, and traveled from Tanana to Dawson; and when, in addition to this, we have journeyed from Cordova and Seward, on Prince William Sound, the one route through the Copper River Valley and the other up the Susitna, completing the travels already begun on these lines, we will have all of Alaska in mental vision, and will be prepared to carve the whole Territory into states, according to natural geographic divisions, and to say that the United States possesses in Alaska a wonderfully resourceful heritage—one which is to add very much to the material greatness of the nation.

Proceeding on our journey we soon reach Fort Gibbon, (Tanana) where the Government Post is located, and where there is a busy branch store of the Northern Commercial Company. Next we arrive at a place called Chena, which is an Indian camp, with a small settlement of white people nearby. This is where we leave the Tanana River, which we entered from the Yukon at Tanana, or Fort Gibbon, and branch into a tributary called Chena Slough. Twelve miles further and we arrive at Fairbanks, the end of our journey for the present. It is now the end of July.

In introducing the reader to Fairbanks, it must be remembered that this is the town of about eight years ago, and not the ambitious city of today. It is the Fairbanks with its Front street, running along the edge of the Slough, exhibiting in the way of business a hotel or two, and several saloons. Of course all the men and dogs in town came down to the little wharf, when they heard the whistle of our boat, to meet us, and, believe me, they could not take their eyes off us—us three women, especially. It was six o'clock in the morning, and none of us had breakfasted. They turned us out of the boat without even a drink of coffee.

We had to hustle our own coffee and we did. We went to the other side of the Slough to prepare our camp. We trudged along with the dog following and with our cat in a bag. Ben was lugging our tent. We were a sight for the townspeople, and they made much of it. I suppose they speculated as to who we were and where we came from. I held guard over the tent until Mr. Mallinson brought our baggage. Then we went to work to get breakfast. We bought some bread, 25 cents per small loaf; three cans of cream for $1; candles, 25 cents each; flour, $5 per sack of fifty pounds; butter, $2 per pound. Rice and sugar the following winter were 50 cents a pound straight; bacon and ham, 50 cents a pound. There were very few potatoes or candles in the market. Coal oil was $5 per five-gallon can; lard, 50 cents a pound; and so on.

So you can see we had to rustle and hustle to get a grubstake before winter, and only two months to accomplish it in. But once settled in our tent, we were comparatively comfortable. While Ben did longshoring at $1 an hour, at all hours of day and night, I did anything I could find to do that was honorable and honest, and we soon began to count up dollars against each other, but of course my husband got ahead of me.

But we were not the only persons tenting. The tent colony soon grew to quite a size. Moreover, I enjoyed living in a tent, although it was only 8x10 in size. But I found it necessary to put up a sign on the door when I went up town, so I would recognize my own home when I got back, for in some way, to me, they all looked alike. Time sped on, and when the frosty mornings came, the fresh, bracing air seemed so animating, and the sun rising over the hills, the smell of cooking coffee from the neighboring tents, while I went to the Slough for fresh, cold water to wash in—all these appeared to put spice and spirit into my veins, and I felt that life was worth living. The grandeur of the sun risings and the simple life bound me close to the heart of nature until the old word, happiness, revealed its meaning to me.

Those were the days in which I loved to work, and sang a merry song the while. The weather was clear, the climate so bracing and the light so bright that I felt like thanking the Author of all good that I possessed the faculties necessary to enjoy these rich blessings. The soft rain, when it came, was like balm to the dry, parched earth; besides it helped the miners in their work of sluicing, for this was a dry season.

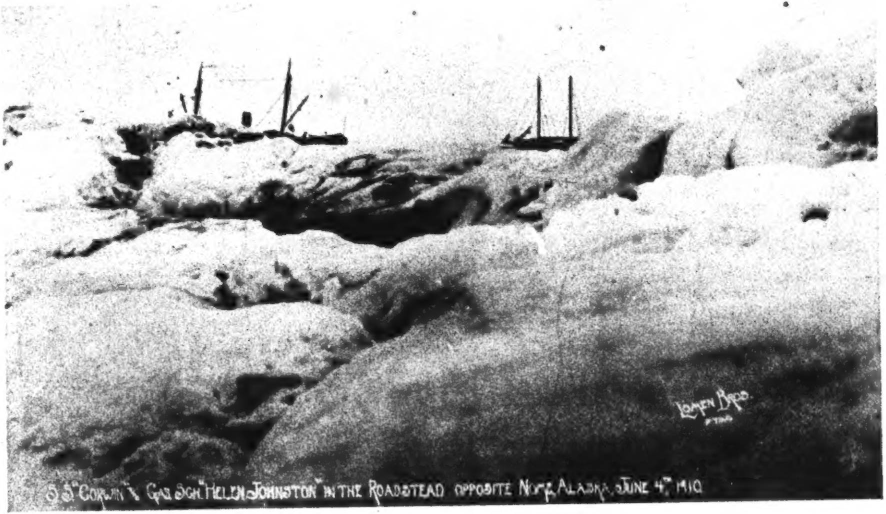
In these days I asked myself whether or not the joys of this simple life could be realized outside of Alaska. The day would pass and the glory of the sunset would come like a burst of grandeur from the northwestern sky. It was like a crown of the truer gold to a day of good things. I remember one sunset so grand and pure and gentle in the blending of its thousand colors that I cried out within me: "This is God!"

Believe me, I cannot understand how a human can live in the midst of such glory without feeling its omnipotence and recognizing its Omnipresence. In the glory and splendor of these Alaska evenings, when earth and sky embraced each other, and the sweet, pure melody of blinding colors sang songs of love and peace, I said that life in Alaska is a divine charm.

But in the midst of all this glory, one cannot help thinking that while it prevails there are people in the town gathering in the saloons and tinsel halls for the dance of shame. Yes, Alaska has both glory and shame, and I suppose these are shared the world over according to one's capacity for the appropriation of good or evil.

Our first year in Fairbanks was one of progress for the town as well as for ourselves, individually. From a handful of people at the place when we arrived, newcomers soon increased their numbers, and the settlement assumed an air of business ambition. The gold strike which had been made some time before was every day proving to be more substantial. News of the increase of new finds spread over the country, and prospectors rushed to the place from many locations. By the end of August more boats arrived with passengers from Nome and other points, some of whom we knew quite well. This was most gratifying. At this point of our growth, the population of Fairbanks was more like a large family than a heterogeneous collection of pioneer prospectors.

Many were watching the boats in expectation of receiving their winter supplies. Others were welcoming their wives and children. Some were searching for old partners of other days and other locations, in order to take up life and adventure together again. Of these not a few had gone through the previous winter alone, and had staked claims, finding good pay. They had done their


S.S. "Corwin" & Gas Sch. "Helen Johnston" in the Roadstead opposite Nome, Alaska, June 4th 1910
Lomen Bros.
Photo

STEAMERS IN THE ICE AT NOME.

first assessments for the year. As time passed, the number of log cabins increased, and tents disappeared to give place to these improvements. Fortunately there is an abundance of timber, and the people were permitted to cut all they needed to build with, or to equip their claims. A good many went to the woods and cut timber or logs and sold them to the business people of the place, with which to build homes, as against the coming of their families, the following summer, taking provisions for a grubstake for their pay, so as to work on their claims during the coming winter. The price was $1 a log. Others cut cordwood and sold it to the restaurants for cooking purposes. The price for this was $8 a cord on the average. And this is what my husband did for some time when not longshoring. He made his way through timber and underbrush until he found a claim, and he staked it. In fact he staked, or located two claims. In evenings and early mornings he would run down to his claims and cut logs, for there was plenty standing, tall and strong, to build our cabin with. Thus he cut and hewed and dragged those heavy logs all by himself. How he managed to get them one upon another, ten logs high, is still a mystery to me, but he accomplished it. Then he put on a roof of small logs, laid close together; and over these he placed large pieces of birch bark, to keep out the rain. These sections of bark were so overlaid as to shed water.

Nails were $1 a pound, and scarce at that. The long ones were at the rate of six or eight for $1. A window with four panes was $5, and the cabin builder was lucky, indeed, to get one, because they were not only expensive, but hard to find. I thought for a time we would have to cut a hole in the wall and fill it with transparent bottles for a window, as they did in the early Dawson days. Do you know how to build a window with bottles? Well, you stand one upright, and invert the other, alternately, and chink the spaces between with moss or rags to keep out the cold. These windows do not supply much light, but they are better than none at all.

Well, we dug up the price of a window and found one. We made a door of small poles and slabs sawed off the round logs. We used the soles of rubber boots for hinges. We got our cabin finished, and in September we moved into it with our dog, cat, stove, bedding and all—all we had.

Our location was in the woods, that is, that of the first cabin. We could see nothing of the outside world. I called this "the house that Ben built." It was a pretty good job, considering the difficulties to be overcome, for Ben did not know how to cut down a tree when he began the work. He had lived a city life in both England and America. As for the writer, I was born in the "wild and woolly hills of Wales," near the border of England, so when

I came to America, I began to look for the woods, which I failed to find, until I went to the Nortland. Then I became happy.

My early country and outdoor life came in pretty handy up in Alaska. You can believe me as to this. Many classes of utensils were so scarce that I had to become an inventor. But I suppose the substitution of wooden pegs for nails was resorted to before my time. Nevertheless, I became an expert at this. I taught Ben how to make and use wooden pegs. But this was but one of a score or two of things which we did because "necessity is the mother of invention."

When ice began to form on the sides of the Slough we knew that winter was coming. The trees put on a yellow tinge, and very soon the leaves fell to the ground. The last boat had gone. It was arranged that the boat called the Koyukuk should winter at Fairbanks. Ben walked down to Chena through the timber to meet this boat, for we expected some friends up from Nome—Mr. and Mrs. Simpson—who were coming to live in Fairbanks. Later Mr. Simpson became a partner with Ben in the wooding business. He soon earned money enough to build a cabin for himself, wife and family. The latter consisted of dogs, cats and parrots.

Now winter was upon us. It appeared to come "as a thief in the night," for one morning we awoke to find everything frozen up that was freezable, and lots of snow on the ground. The snow looked beautiful resting on the boughs of the green spruce trees, and, then, the gray skies, and winter—"a tear and a sigh, the snow flakes are falling, summer, good-bye."

Each day as we needed it, Ben cleared away the brush to burn, and cut down trees we didn't need. So did our neighbors, and this went on until the trees were removed, and we could see each other's cabins. After that it was less lonesome. We got acquainted with one another, and visited quite a little. It was a cold winter to be sure. Believe me, we had a good deal of 40 below weather.

Meanwhile, Fairbanks had built a church made of logs, called St. Matthew's Episcopal Church. We often attended this church Sunday evenings. It was a picture—a log church with odor of pines, and moss hanging from between each log, and coal oil lamps suspended from the ridge pole. It always was packed with people of all nations, I may say. The ladies wore fur caps, coats and mitts, which were so stout as to help fill the seats. The men would enter with icicles hanging to their mustaches two or three inches long. The assembly room was warm enough to soon melt them off. It was common to hear the dogs scratching or fighting on the outside to be let in, and they sometimes were stealthily admitted. This plan prevented dog fights on the outside of the church, because these malamutes are a fighting breed. They are the proper dogs for cold countries. They are good workers. They are covered with long fur coats which keep them warm in winter, and which they shed at the beginning of the summer months. These dogs come in very handy when prospectors go on a long mush in a stampede.

All you have to do is to hitch them up, the more the better, single file, to your seven-foot sled, and pile in your grub, such as evaporated potatoes, dog salmon, and flour, baking powder and a lard bucket, with which to make your hot-cake batter. A miner can't get along without rolled oats and hot cakes for breakfast. Then, they pile in the tent and the blankets, some cook pots and an axe, a gun to shoot moose with, and matches too.

The men take along a few pair of clean socks and an extra pair of moccasins, and a pair of snowshoes to break trail with when the snow is deep. But we have not space to go along with one of these dog trains through all its experiences. When the goal is reached, the men begin prospecting and some will stake claims, and if they find gold will hurry back to record them. These persons are liable to meet others on the trail heading for the same place, and to these they will boost the new location in the hope of selling their claims. This is one branch of the business. If they sell out, they get so much, whether the claim staked is any good or not.

These claims are called "wild cats" until gold is discovered.

Here's to the hardy pioneer,
  Who has helped to blaze the trail,
And has pulled his sled from far and near,
  With never a murmur, never a wail.
Yes, mushed it along at fifty below,
  By the light of the silvery moon,
With a heart so light and sled packed tight,
  Some forty miles or so.
Then he camps where there's lots of timber,
And starts to cook his meagre supper
  Of beans and bacon, and coffee or tea,
  And a little rice on the side, you see.
'Tis here where his pipe of tobacco to him tastes sweet,
  And, while watching the curls of smoke,
He falls asleep.

Among these prospectors are men who will work their claims until they strike the pay streak, then they will sell out at a good price. This is another branch of the prospecting business. But this is not the industry that most helps to develop Alaska. It is the man who digs, and digs and sticks to the end, till he finds pay gold, or finds none, at bedrock. This is the sort of grit that my husband displayed, and it pays all hands the best.

In Alaska one can go out on the hills and kill enough game, and pack in enough meat for the whole winter in a short time. The average catch is moose, mountain sheep and caribou; also rabbits, spruce chicken and ptarmigan. And, too, there are an abundance of fish in the streams such as grayling and whitefish. The dog sleds bring this food home. The dressing is mostly done on the hills, while the animals are warm, because it is easier, and the meat keeps better and is considerably lighter to carry.

It is then cut up and packed in caches to freeze. It is taken in and cooked, a piece at a time. It is delicious either roasted, fried, or in "Mulligan style."

A pioneer who has not been in the country long enough to see the ice break up in the spring is looked upon as a Chee-chocker, or as a greenhorn.

My first winter in Fairbanks was my first experience in beholding the Northern Lights. As is the case with the sunsets, the method of writing is not sufficient to paint the glory of these heavenly lights. They shimmer along the sky with a blending of their exquisite colors, ever changing and chasing each other. They speed away from you and then return to the zenith. Then they separate into two great armies of light and color, making a cracking noise which is magnetic. How often we have gazed at these displays, until our necks were stiff and we were very cold, for strange to say, the lights are most beautiful in the coldest weather.

From these lights shedding their glory on the white snow beneath, the scene is one of strange illumination, and one can read as in the brightest daylight.

The winters in Fairbanks are a delight when compared to those at Nome. I had only just come to enjoy it when spring came. When you see the sun peeping over the hills, a little higher each day, you may know that spring is coming. When the ice moves out of the water in front of Fairbanks, it is called the final break-up. The river boats are then painted up and made ready for traffic, and everything puts on a more stirring air, for the "Good Old Summer Time." The miners then come in from the creeks, on horseback, or muleback, with Winchesters under their arms, protecting their packs of gold dust strung across the backs of the animals' necks. These sacks are delivered to the bank. However, there were but few attempts at robbery. We had a small courthouse and jail, but there was but little for either to do.

But as spring came our mining experiences on a larger scale began.

CHAPTER IX.

HARDSHIPS OF CAMP AND TRAIL.

Close to a Fortune, But Lost It—Mr. Mallinson Goes on a Fruitless Stampede—Mrs. Mallinson Nearly Loses an Eye—Logging at One Dollar a Log—On Fairbanks Creek—Mrs. Mallinson Rebukes a Masher—She is Exhausted on the Trail—A Chapter of Dangers, Mishaps, Escapes and Hardships.

MR. MALLINSON and Mr. Simpson, the latter whom I already have spoken about, had struck up a partnership for the mining business, so now that spring had come they were on the lookout for an opening. One day, along came a woman who was a neighbor of ours, and she said to my husband:

"Mr. Mallinson, wouldn't you like to do the assessment work and some prospecting on a claim I have out on Goldstream, for a half interest?"

"Why, yes," replied my husband.

"All right," she said. "It is No. 17." So Ben and his partner, Mr. Simpson, took over the matter under consideration. After some talk Mr. Simpson said: "I have no money to waste on a wild cat claim like that. What will we do if we find nothing? No, I will not go into that deal."

Ben laid the proposition before another man and this one refused also. So he had to give it up. The woman offered the claim to another man who found a miner to join him. They went to work on it and struck it rich. Mrs. Kenneth, the owner of the claim, sold her half interest for $10,000, to the men who were working the claim, and went to the "outside" to enjoy herself. The two men paid her this amount out of their share of the proceeds of their work. The following winter they cleaned up $100,000. The claim will pay big for the next three or four years.

The men who took up with Mrs. Kenneth's proposition soon were able to build palatial homes for their wives and to send their children to college.

No! maybe my husband didn't feel bad to think he was so near making a fortune, when that pessimistic Simpson backed out. Well, such is life. But my husband was not easily discouraged, and, as for myself, I was in Alaska to win. I would not even entertain the thought of failure. I must confess, however, that I did not like Mr. Simpson so well after that. We had given him a lot to build his cabin on and had helped him with money and in other ways, and my heart was a little sore towards him. When his cabin was about finished a man came along who wanted it for a soda water factory, and he sold it to him for $850, and went to live in a tent. His money was soon gone.

While Mr. Simpson was putting up a new cabin Ben built an addition to ours, so that we had quite a pioneer Alaska home when it was finished. We cut into the two buildings together and put a door between. We then had a pretty fine kitchen, and I could spread out a little. I covered the walls and ceiling of the main cabin with a dark green burlap. This added to our comfort, and, with another window, we had much more light. We washed out a whole lot of gunny sacks, ripped them up and sewed them together, and in this way made a presentable carpet.

Now, I felt quite proud of my home and charged my husband not to walk on my "new carpet" without first carefully cleaning his feet, but to come in by way of the "back door" and to leave his rubbers in the kitchen. Nor was our dog allowed in this "parlor"—only the kitty. I made wall pockets of birch bark to put newspapers and letters in, and the like. You will notice that all this time Fairbanks was growing, and becoming quite a town. We already had a printing office and a newspaper—the Fairbanks News—at 25 cents a copy. It was composed of one sheet. I had other wall pockets for brush and comb and the like. We did not receive many letters. The mail did not arrive often. We often would wait in line for an hour or more, in the bitter cold, and then be told that there was "nothing for Mallinson." The postoffice was little more than a hole in the wall, partitioned off the bank. We used to feel pretty hard towards our Eastern friends because they did not write more often.

Now, there was a rumor of a big gold strike in the Kantishna country, and Ben said he would have to take in the stampede. So he and Mr. Simpson outfitted themselves and were off. I was left alone, except that Mrs. Simpson lived next door. They took grub enough to last but one month, which cost $100. We were lonesome, but a Dr. Leonard came along and gave a lecture in the church on the "Twentieth Century," and we had other entertainments. One night we came home tired, and on opening a bottle of soda water, which had become warm, the cork flew out and struck me in the eye. I suffered terrible pain and agony from the wound and thought I had lost my sight. I could not sleep that night, so I stayed with Mrs. Simpson. I resorted to tealeaf poultices, and for days I suffered from the pain. For two weeks I did not know whether I would be blind in one eye or not. Finally it yielded to the treatment and became normal.

Meanwhile Ben was having even worse troubles. His boat was capsized, and he lost his grub in the Yukon. It is yet a mystery how he got out of the water himself. He hit the bottom of the Yukon, the boys say, and came up again like a rubber ball, and grabbed the boat, and climbed into it again. He had his back to the bow of the boat, and there were lots of sleepers (dead trees) which border the river, so that instead of ducking these trees, as they swiftly swept by, the larger limbs struck Ben on the back of the neck, and over he went into the cold water of the mighty Yukon, but the boys held the boat steady, and when he came up on the opposite side he dexterously rescued himself.

But the party lost their grub and Ben was drenched and shivering from the cold. They were obliged to land and build a fire to dry out, where they slept round it till morning. Then they discovered that huge bears had visited them in their sleep, and smelled them over, leaving without doing any one of them the slightest injury.

They rose and proceeded to the point where the strike was supposed to have been made, to meet with only a "frost." It was a hard trip, and they made haste to return. Believe me, that Ben Mallinson and Rufus Simpson were horrible looking objects when they got back. They had not been shaven since they left, and were covered with dirt; besides they hadn't had a square meal after they lost their outfit in the Yukon. You should have seen me cutting Ben's hair after he got home, and shaving his neck. It was a sight, but I did the job, and saved him $5, which would have been the barber's price.

Similar scenes were being enacted over at Simpson's cabin, for he was even a worse sight than Ben. But Mrs. Simpson, although old enough to be my mother, did not possess the courage nor the skill to hair cut or shave her husband. He had to give up his good coin to the barber for that.

After a few days' rest they went back to the woods and started in where they left off, logging for the money there was in it. It was hard work, but I was working also, and earning almost as much as Ben. I used to let him cook his own breakfast in those days, and he often brought me a cup of tea, while I was resting a bit, before resuming work for the day. The summer soon was over and another winter was at hand. Then Ben thought he could do better on the creeks, so he engaged himself to a man who owned a good claim on Fairbanks Creek. He soon sent word for me to go to him and visit with a lady I knew there, by the name of Mrs. Jones. The creek on which Ben was working is called Fairbanks Creek. It is twenty-eight miles from Fairbanks City. We already had a railroad, the first in the Tanana Valley, running from Chena to Gilmore, via Fairbanks, it being twelve miles to Fairbanks, and sixteen to Gilmore Creek, so after reaching Gilmore, we had to mush it all the way over hill and dale to Fairbanks Creek.

The railway of which I speak was put in through the instrumentality of Falcon Joslin and Delegate Wickersham and others in the interests of the Northern Navigation Company to overcome the shallow water of the Slough at certain seasons, and extended from Chena, twelve miles to Fairbanks and to the creeks beyond it, and about sixteen miles farther to Gilmore Creek. A freight rate of 25 cents a pound added something to the cost of transporting grubstakes as well as to the convenience of travel. So it was that the opening of navigation in this year brought us the little dinky engine with its boxcars and one real passenger car. When the first bell of this little engine rang out on the clear air, it was the occasion of great rejoicing in Fairbanks. All the bells in Fairbanks rang in tune with it.

So I went on the train to Gilmore, and of course, took "Nigger" with me. You see, by this time, our dog "Mallinson Beauty," had brought forth a family of little ones, and I saved the best one of the brood, the pet, and called him Nigger. I paid 75 cents for the pup and $2.50 for my own fare for the short trip. I was the only lady on board the train. All the others were rough-necks busily engaged in smoking. Those who had cigars were full-fledged operators, while those pulling at pipes were prospectors, or hoodlums—miners of a minor scale.

As I left the train, I overheard a rowdy say something disrespectful of the pup, and I turned to him and said: "Maybe he'll turn out a better dog than you a man," and with this I whistled with indifference. He appeared to wish to apologize, but I did not give him a chance. I hastened to the roadhouse for dinner, where I found myself the object of much attention and many remarks. At the close of my meal I went over to the counter to pay for it, when one of them came up and offered to pay for it, but I declined with thanks, and insisted on the lady at the counter taking my dollar. I begged some scraps for Nigger, and then marched away. We then hiked for the trail. We walked and walked over the rough trail, when, after a while, a man who was on the train overtook me, and said: "Good afternoon!" I returned his salutation, but kept my pace, but not so with him. He wanted to know if this was the first time I had been on the creeks; was I a newcomer in the country; how far was I going to mush it; how long was I going to stay; and, finally said, if I didn't mind he would walk my pace and keep me company.

At length he asked me if I were single, and I responded: "No, I am married, and if you don't go on and mind your own business, you'll run into my husband on his way to meet me, and then you'll know to your sorrow that I am neither single, nor out to make acquaintances such as you. Please, sir, we will walk apart."

With this he quickly lifted his hat and wished me a polite "good day," and quickened his step,

BYLER'S ROAD HOUSE—NEAR FAIRBANKS.

and was soon out of sight. By this time I was in sight of Pedro Creek, the first that was staked in the early days. As I walked along, observing a lonely cabin here and there, rude reminders of past days and the rich dumps that had been sluiced up, I noticed smoke rising from others. A little further on I came to Golden, a little settlement along the trail-side—a sort of halfway place between Fairbanks and Fairbanks Creek. Here I called on a lady, a Mrs. Williams, whom I knew slightly and while I rested, who should drop in but Mrs. Jones, with whom I was to stay while visiting my husband on Fairbanks Creek. Mr. Mallinson had told her I was on my way, and she had come out to meet me. We stayed that night together, at Mrs. Williams, and I get pretty well acquainted with the ladies of Golden, all of whom made a real live fuss over me, and caused me to feel very happy.

We had a splendid breakfast the next morning, and she was much disappointed when I told her I didn't eat breakfast. However, I ate a little to please her. We had five miles up hill to reach the top and five miles down hill yet to go to reach Fairbanks Creek.

The journey was quite pleasant. At the summit we met with much beautiful scenery. There were great spruce trees, green and tall, and splendid birch trees, with their large leaves shimmering in the bright sun, and with white bark. How clean and pretty they looked. My arms could extend but half way round as I tried to measure them. But we pushed on, and I began to realize that it was well for me that I had eaten some breakfast. But we kept up our weary pace and I felt that we never would reach the top of the highest hill. I could not have held out only for the beauty of the scenery which inspired me to greater strength.

The air was light and pure and we could hear the tinkling of bells on the freighters' horses in the distance; and we could hear the teamsters themselves whistling merrily five miles off. I was so high on these hills that I felt I could touch the heavens. I was intoxicated with the sublime beauties of the place, but my head was a little dizzy when I looked down. These trees reminded me of men, yes, real men, who have a mind and will of their own. The sky and pure air appeared to draw them up from the valley as the sun draws up a plant shining through the glass of a hothouse up and Heavenward.

But it was easier going down hill, once we were over the divide. We arrived at Fairbanks Creek just as the sun was setting in all its glory. The miners were busy washing for, and eating their suppers, or sawing wood for the next day's fires, and for thawing their prospect holes for the next day's hoisting. I was tired and so was poor "Nigger." So I sat down and watched Mrs. Jones get supper and poor Nig crawled under the cabin where we could not get at him, for he was all in, and would sooner lie down than eat. I may say the cabins there are built about a foot above the ground as a protection from the icy floors of earth beneath them.

So here I remained for a week trying to get used to creek life, with Ben explaining his plans to me. All the boys round would scare up excuses to come to Jones' to see me. This was their way when a "new lady came to town," just to see what she looked like. Then they would go home and gossip about the newcomer. Through their gallantry I was shown all through the mines, and I kept them busy answering questions. They told me that had I been a boy they would give me a job, for sometimes I got them cornered as to how to answer me. Then one would say: "Come here, Bill, and tell me if you can answer this lady, for, of all women to talk, she is the limit. She can tell us a few things, too, that we can't tell her."

I assured them I did not know what I was talking about; that I was talking for information only. "Well," they said, "little woman, whether you know what you're talking about or not, you have given us a hunch or two. Glad you came. We have learned a few lessons from you, and as we are independent up round here, we believe in paying for our lessons, so come on to the cabin and we will give you a nugget."

This was playing into my mitt fine and over we go to the cabin to look over a bag of fine nuggets. The boys turned them out on the greasy table, telling me to pick the one I liked best. I selected a very pretty one about the size of a bean. "Oh, no," said the boys, "pick out a large one." I selected a larger one, but they wouldn't stand for that, for there were some as large as a small hen's egg. I could not scare up the courage to take a large one. I considered the work and danger the men had endured to get them, but with their big hearts in control they did not think of this at all. So one of them said:

"Here, take this one." It was a real beauty, and one of the large ones. He turned to the others in the cabin, asking:

"Is this all right?" and they all shouted "Yes!" I thanked them and Ben and I started for home. My visit at Fairbanks Creek was all too short, but I had made lots of friends. We started about seven a. m. When we got back to Gilmore where the train was waiting, Ben urged me to go home on the train with "Nigger," and said he would prefer to walk. I declared I would do nothing of the kind. I said I could walk the whole way if he could. But we had sixteen miles yet to "mush," and I did not count the cost, for we had been traveling down hill for more than fifteen miles. After eating a good dinner we headed for Fairbanks. I pushed on for a while, but later, found myself falling behind, Ben and Nig walking my pace instead of Ben's. Pretty soon he turned round and shouted:

"Come on. What's the trouble?"

"Oh, nothing," I assured him, "only I thought there was no hurry."

"Better get a move on," he said, "or else we'll be in the night, and we have to get over this hill yet." I told him I'd catch up, but I didn't, and Ben came back and helped me till we were three miles up the hill, a steady climb all the way. I had to stop every now and then to rest. When we reached the top of the hill, I secretly wished I had taken Ben's advice and come on the train. My limbs were getting shaky, and I felt I would not be able to hold out much longer. Ben suggested that we go down the hill gently, by a zig zag method and so we did, for it was the only way. We pressed on until we were within five miles of the town. Ben cheered me up by saying that when we got around the hill we would see the Fairbanks lights, because the town could then boast electric lights furnished by the Northern Navigation Company. But when we got round the bend no lights were in sight. Then I scolded Ben for leading me on under false pretenses. I was growing very tired. My head ached and my feet were sore. As for poor "Nigger," he was all in. He laid down on the road to rest and watch us out of sight. Then he ran to catch up. He became so exhausted that Ben picked him up and carried him a while. By this time I was wishing he could pick me up and carry me a while, but I wanted to say that I had walked twenty-eight miles in one day over hill and dale, and the wet moss. Night was now upon us, and yet we were a long way from home. We could hear some mules behind us, which proved to be a pack train carrying gold dust from Cleary Creek, about a dozen miles back. They were tied to one another, with sacks of gold on each one's neck, with a man riding on every other mule, carrying a gun ready to combat with any hold-up that might venture to attack them.

I saw them close upon us, and asked Ben to ask one of the men if he would not let me throw myself across one of the mule's backs. But Ben refused to do this, and told me those mules had enough to carry, as each one had thousands of dollars in gold on his neck. So on they went past us until their tinkling bells were lost to our hearing. At this my heart went down sure, and I told Ben I would have to lie down on the trail till morning; that I could hold out no longer.

But he got me to take hold of his arm and drag along. He pulled me along the last three miles. I fail to see how he did it. He was completely tired out, but was as gentle as a lamb.

We were now in town, but in darkness, as something had happened to the lights, and they were out. This is why we could not see the lights when Ben expected to see them. Once home, I fell on the bed and did not budge until Ben had supper ready. He helped me to the table. After supper he got me some hot water to soak my feet. They were awfully sore.

Believe me, I never moved all night. I had had enough of the trail. But I revived.

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CHAPTER X.

DAWN AFTER LONG DARKNESS.

A New Attempt—Failure on Fairbanks Creek—Water Drove Mr. Mallinson Off His Claim—An Attempt on Cleary Creek—Mrs. Mallinson Falls in a Covered Glacier in Water to Her Elbows While 50 Below Zero—The Return to Fairbanks—The Beginnings of a Fortune on Goldstream.

WITH the experiences of the year behind us, when the snow fell, we decided to go back to Fairbanks Creek and try mining for ourselves, so we packed up our movable property, and hitched up the dogs. By this time "Mallinson Beauty's" family had grown strong enough to be trained for the trail. They were six months old. We gave "Beauty Mallinson," the mother, away to a man who was going into the hills alone.

So off we went with sled packed before daybreak. We got along fairly well until we got to the summit. Here the dogs gave out, and Ben and myself had to get in and help. We pressed on, but reached Fairbanks Creek not long after dark. We went to the Jones' place for that night and they were surprised to see us, for they knew not of our coming. Next day Ben went back to town for more grub, for we had packed light, to allow me to ride part of the way. While he was gone I looked for a house to live in. At length Mrs. Jones and I found a cabin which had been abandoned. In we went, and I appropriated it. And such a cabin! An old greasy table; an old rusty Yukon stove; an old rustic bunk nailed to the wall; a pole floor; a pole roof; one little dinky window and one dirty greasy pack of cards on the table, alongside of half a 'wat of candle.

But I decided to stay and to work I went to clean up. I could do little until Ben came to tear down and build a better bed, put up our own stove, and get some wood, so as to build a fire, for it was bitter cold. So I stayed that night with Mrs. Jones. Next day Ben came home and we got into our cabin and were soon feeling quite at home. It was not long before Ben staked a piece of ground and began to sink a hole. It was slow work, for he didn't well understand the business, but he grasped the situation and succeeded amazingly well, and the hole was going down each day quite rapidly.

When he was down about twenty feet, he had the misfortune to fall from the ladder into the hole, spraining his foot. He came limping home on a crutch made from a spruce bush. He was laid up for three days. Then the water came into his shaft so fast that he had to abandon it. Christmas was now at hand and the people on the creeks were celebrating, but we contented ourselves with a rabbit which Ben went out and shot. I cooked it in fine style and we had a splendid Christmas dinner, but on the outside a fearful snowstorm was raging. Darkness fell upon us at 2 o'clock p. m. and I played my accordion while Ben smoked his pipe. I always took much comfort playing this instrument, and played anything from the soul-stirring hymns and patriotic airs to the dreamy waltz, or wild and woolly jig, which sets one's feet moving.

As we were not doing well we decided to move to Cleary Creek which was considered one of the richest in Alaska. So we packed up and moved in 50-degree-below weather. As we pushed along we came to a glacier on the trail where there had been a stream in summer with a wooden bridge, but in winter it was frozen tight, and the water came over the ice, rising and freezing until it was nearly mountain high. The dogs were making towards this treacherous ice and I jumped out to save myself. Mr. Mallinson was at the handle bars, so he stopped the dogs, and I walked by the dangerous place, and, as I thought, on the thickest part of the ice, but it proved to be the weakest, and I broke through up to my waist. I put out my hand to try to save myself and went down to my elbows and was cut badly by the ice. Ben hurried to my rescue and pulled me out. I was drenched in ice water, and it was fifty below zero, so you can imagine my predicament. I was instantly covered with frost and ice.

Then Ben cut off my shoes and stockings with his knife, for they could be gotten off in no other way. They were frozen solid to my feet. After a good, hard rubbing, I wrapped my feet up in a blanket. Ben put me on the sled, and hurried the dogs on over the hill, me shivering and shaking with my teeth chattering. I thought I would shake to pieces. We got over the hill and down to Chatham Creek. Here were lots of miners at work, and several boiler houses. I got into a boiler house. The miner in charge hastened me over to his cabin, and set his wife to rubbing me with snow and ice, to take out the frost and bring back circulation. So between this good woman, Mrs. Howell, and Ben rubbing me in turns, I slowly came to my senses, and the pain was terrible. I was still cold within, and Mrs. Howell fixed me a glass of hot whiskey and forced me to drink all of it. I at once toppled over in a half dazed condition, for the whiskey was too much for me, as I had not drank any before. Then they gave me tea and I began to revive. But I was tired and sore and stiff, and unable to proceed on my journey. So I went to bed. Ben went ahead and got things ready in a cabin and came back for me, and after thanking Mrs. Howell for her great hospitality, we said "good bye," and went to our new home. I then thought of the world of good one woman can do, and repeated the lines:

"They talk about a woman's sphere
As though there were a limit,
There's not a place on earth or Heaven,
There's not a task to mankind given,
There's not a sorrow or a woe
There's not a whisper, yes, or no,
There's not a life a death or birth
That has a pennyweight of worth
Without a woman in it."

Now, all this was hard luck for the beginning of the New Year, but by this time I was getting accustomed to these rough knocks. I also began to think that there was to be nothing but bad luck for us. Our cabin leaked badly, and after it rained all day and stopped on the outside it would rain for two hours more on the inside, from the leaky roof which held the water. We had to keep things covered and to hold an umbrella over us in the cabin until it ceased. Meantime we did a little mining and made a few dollars, but not enough to consider ourselves well paid for our afflictions, but sufficient to tempt us to try again. We went back to Fairbanks in July and I stayed there while Ben rustled a piece of ground on Goldstream. He took a lease with an option to buy, and secured two partners by the name of Francis and McLellen. At bedrock they found fairly good pay.

Then they began to put in larger machinery and take out a winter dump. That required more men. So they took in two more partners, a Swedish man, named Nelson, and a Scotch lad named Herlick.

Now this was to be my first experience in cooking for men on the creeks, and how I disliked leaving my nice, cozy little cabinin Fairbanks to live the rough, tough creek life, but I had to go, and well do I remember the day. It was New Year's day I landed from the train at the claim, bundles and all. It was 1 p. m. when I got to the boys' cabin. It was very cold. Ben had told me they had a nice clean cabin, lined up with cheese cloth to make it look clean and to hold back the moss from falling into the food, beds, etc.

But talk about a cabin! Ye gods! The cheese cloth was as black as night, and the floor a "holy fright." The scene was awful. Five bunks around the walls, all dusty, with the four-paned window, full of empty cream cans, and upon the stove, a pot of coffee boiling. Boxes of grub were piled upon the floor, and in one corner sat three sacks of flour with hams and bacon, coal oil and wood.

"In the name of the Lord," I said to myself, "what shall I do?" I sat down on a box of cream and cried. It was too much, I thought, to be asked to clean up this miserable chaos. In walked Ben, and to his surprise, he found me crying. When I told him what I was weeping about, he said:

"There's a $5 bill in my trousers, hanging up on yon nail. Take it and go back, and I shall never ask you up here again, even if I never have a square meal!" and out he goes and down to the boiler house to hoist buckets of dirt. He was the engineer, and the only way to make money was to keep the bucket moving, while the other boys kept busy filling it.

After a little while I came to the conclusion that it would be very selfish in me to go back and let the men do their own cooking, so I decided to stay, and go to work. I started to clean up a little and to cook supper. At six o'clock five men came up the trail in the dark, Ben among them. They were the crowd I was cooking for, some tall, some short, some fair, some dark, but all of them hungry. All but Ben seemed shy at seeing a woman around. I told them that supper was ready and to sit up, and, believe me, they did sit up, each one on an empty box, and they proceeded to fill their empty stomachs. Finally one ventured to say:

"Well, boys, there's no flies on this, eh?" meaning that the meal was satisfactory, and was a treat. Another remarked that it was the only sunbeam meal he had had for a month of Sundays. After supper they began to move the bunks to another cabin, and Ben kept moving things around until the place was in decent shape. From now on I had to be up at 5 a. m. for I was on a monthly salary.

Cooking in a mining camp is no snap, believe me for that. I pasted newspapers on the dirty cheese cloth. We had some on hand, for some of the boys took the Fairbanks News at $4 a month. Then the boys brought me some picture calendars and I hung them in place and improvised some rugs and made the cabin look quite clean and attractive, and so I felt more at home. The severe cold prevailed and the Northern Lights arched the heavens while the snow glistened in the moonlight. It was light enough at nights for the boys to read their letters from their sweethearts on the outside.

It was two months after my arrival before I saw a white woman, for scarcely any one knew I was on the creek, and, of course, I did not go anywhere. When I got through work in the afternoons I used to go down and keep Ben company in the boiler house. I took him a hot cup of tea about 4 o'clock every day. It was not long before I could run the engine as well as Ben, so I often ran it while he sharpened picks. In the evenings the boys would sit around and have me entertain them, for they thought I was about the funniest being in the camp. I used to recite to them some pieces of my own poor poetry, such as:

Folks used to say in olden times,
  There is no place like home,
But that don't suit our pioneers,
  As round the creeks they roam.
The rich man in his auto car
  Is looking for new routes,
But as I travel far and near
  I hitch up my mal'mutes.

One day it was announced that there would be a dance given on the creek, so Ben and I started out with the dogs to the dance. Off we went and had a good time. It was here I met my first lady friends, and by degrees I got acquainted with all of them, say about twenty in that neighborhood. They did not all belong to Goldstream where I lived, but some to the neighboring creeks. We had one up-to-date O. D. O. society in this creek settlement, as they had in others throughout Alaska. O. D. O. means "our day out." We now were getting along pretty well and the boys were making money. At the end of the Summer, Ben and I and McLellen received a hunch to go outside and we went, but as soon as I got East, I took sick—homesick for Alaska. I grew thin and peaked and would pine day by day. Along came the doctor and told Ben he must take me back to Alaska—to the hills from whence I came—otherwise I would die.

SUNSET ON THE YUKON.

CHAPTER XI.

WINNING A FORTUNE.

GOING IN TO ALASKA BY WAY OF THE COPPER RIVER VALLEY—RESUMPTION OF GOLD MINING ON GOLDSTREAM—A GRAND TRIP FROM SUSITNA TO FAIRBANKS BY STAGE—DID WE SUCCEED?—MODERN FAIRBANKS.

ON our return to Alaska we went into the interior by way of Cordova and the Copper River Valley. We made the trail from Chitina to Fairbanks, three hundred and ten miles, and I enjoyed every moment of the long journey. Now, to travel over ice and snow over three hundred miles is, to some people's way of thinking, a journey to be dreaded. Not so with me. I was wrapped in two robes, with foot warmers under my feet, and a good teamster's hand on the reins behind four strapping horses. They got along at a lively pace, bells jingling from the forward straps of the harness. We ran along twenty-five and thirty miles between meals, so to speak, our stage on steel runners instead of wheels, at the rate of about sixty miles a day or more. We had some clear nights when the moon shone so brightly we journeyed by night, in the glory and splendor of the Northern Lights. Of course the horses have to be changed at each roadhouse—each mealtime—where the horses are taken off and fresh ones put on. This is the system of Orr & Co. all along the trail.

These roadhouses are supplied with phones, which are indirectly in touch with the outside and the interior. These resting places maintain good tables and good beds, at $1 each, except at the half way house between Cordova and Fairbanks, where it is $2 for a meal, and with supper, breakfast and bed, it is $5.

These same stages carry the mails to Fairbanks, and the outgoing mail leaves for Cordova and makes connection sometimes with the boats there for Seattle, and not only the mail comes this way, but our Easter bonnets and turkeys for Christmas and Thanksgiving dinners. Then our eggs and lemons come into the interior by this route in the early spring, to tide us over while the ice breaks up and navigation commences. From this time on the trail is but little used. The horses are let loose to rustle for themselves, but they don't have to rustle much, because there is an abundance of grass of all kinds for them until the coming winter.

The rules of the roadhouse humorously run about this way: "Sourdough Hotel, 1333 Icicle Avenue. Best house north of Mexico. Rates, one ounce per day; crap, chuck luck and stud poker games and blackjack games run by the manage-ment, etc., etc." But all this is for consideration for more trifling moments.

We reached Fairbanks just three days prior to Christmas, and so many were glad to see us that I felt very happy. Then, after the holidays, the boys went to work to take out a big winter dump to be able to wash out in the spring big money. You know that we are not supposed to have much money after a visit to the "outside."

Each summer found us hunting for new pay streaks. We were not idle. We worked what we had and looked for more. Those in sight when we left appeared to move on, but we followed for four more years, and we did not follow in vain. I always had wished that I could play musical instruments in an advanced plane of attainment, and now that I am on the "outside" working, and studying and practicing to that end, I can say that even then I did not feel that my hard working days would always continue. I had lived to see wonderful changes in Alaska. I had lived and worked and struggled to see Fairbanks rise from a struggling prospectors' outfitting station to a pretentious young city, and I had personally contributed of my brain and brawn to its growth. For now its streets were filled with automobiles, and many on the creeks were riding in them. Before I left for the "outside" the second time, I could have done the same if that had been to my taste.

Fairbanks had now grown to a city where one could obtain the service of all kinds of bathrooms. And now fresh milk and eggs were for sale, and home-grown pork and fruit were plentiful. It was the same as to poultry and butter, and with the whole variety of garden truck, even to cultivated out-of-door strawberries.

The railroad had been extended farther out, on the creeks, and a wireless station was talking to the distant world.

A fine jail was well conducted, where an old sourdough could enjoy many luxuries the winter through, all because he had not been any to good. There were five churches in Fairbanks—Catholic, Presbyterian, Methodist, Church of England and Christian Science — and a fine large library, free to all. Also a courthouse, sawmills and depot; a telegraph office on duty twenty-four hours a day; two up-to-date banks and a swell postoffice, besides well-ordered headquarters of the Masons, the Eagles, the Arctic Brotherhood and other fraternities. There was a big choral society in winter, and a large social dance about twice a week, with other social functions of the better class too numerous to mention.

There were at hand blueberries, cranberries, raspberries, blackberries, huckleberries, besides, game, fish, fowl and other rarities thrown in. But if you built your cabin out on the creeks, you didn't have to pay rent and you could paddle your own canoe. You could keep all the dogs you wanted to and raise as many chickens as you pleased.

If one gets too much on the bum in Alaska, if he has the dust he can go to the Hot Springs, which has no recuperating equal on earth. The water there contains all the minerals the Lord intends a white man to drink, for the water boils up out of the ground or out of the rocks. If one doesn't yield to this treatment he can consider his time has come, for it goes without saying that nothing more can be done.

In Alaska there is plenty of sunshine, plenty of water to ripen the berries and develop your flowers, and an abundance of cold weather to put vigor and spice into your bones, to give you zest and an appetite. There are no germs in Alaska; the germ belief does not exist there. Just eat three square meals a day and sleep eight hours each night and breathe naturally, and your physical organism will do the rest without any interference.

But I am not here to tell you the experiences of our last two or three years in mining. I have told you some of our hardships and dangers and shall tell you more, but of our successes, they came on Goldstream and elsewhere, nor is the end reached yet. I don't care to talk about my success in Alaska, but I do care to tell you that I went there with a deep desire to find sufficient wealth to develop the great soul of music that is within me, and I found it. I earned it myself.

And if my husband realized more than I did it was because he possessed greater physical strength. I have got all that I need for the present, and I am going back after more as soon as I get my music lessons well going and I can profitably take with me about half a ton of good music.

"Well, Tom, I fear we're up against it,
After all hard work we've done,
And looks like we'll have to quit it,
For she's sure on the bum.
Tough luck—well, I should say—
When you sink all kinds of holes
And not a bit of 'pay.'
It makes you swear,
And pull your hair (if you have any),
And vow you'd not buy more.
The way Dame Fortune has treated us
Would make a fellow sore.
But, hang it all, we can't afford to chuck it up
And leave the country broke—
We'll have to try once more, Tom,
For I've a hunch we'll fill our poke.
If only our beans and bacon will hold out
About a month or more,
We'll work like Trojans, Tom,
Till the sweat from off us pours."
"All right," says Tom, "it's like this—
I'll tell you, if we don't come out on top this time
Here's one that's going to quit and say 'Amen.'
Ha!—quit for good the cussed country.
No more holes will get put down, you see.
Now that's a gonner, take a tip from me."

So to work we start with pick and shovel,
Till we get down our shaft, nice and level.
Through the gravel we pick and hoist
Until we come to lots of frost.
But nothing daunting, go we through,
So a few more sticks we cut and hew
To make a fire to thaw her out,
For this here frost does put you about.
But how can we tell what's beneath it
Unless we go through to prove the secret?
So, to work, with lots of vim,
To find the paystreak, thick or thin.
And full of hope in finding the blooming "pay,"
They work hard and fast the live-long day,
For this 'ere mining is next to gambling, they do say.
"Now, Pard, hoist up this bucketful,
But there's nothing in it, and we're not fools,
And I feel like throwing down my tools.
For this is just how mining goes.
And just as soon as I get through all this thawed dirt
I'll come up and on me put a clean, dry shirt
And call it off,
As I can't see a color in the cussed stuff.
Now, Tom, let's finish down to bedrock, anyway,
For it's generally there we find the pay;
And it's only another thaw before we can tell
Whether we're in heaven or in hell.
Well, a few more buckets won't hurt us while we're at it."
And this is how these two kept on scrapping,
Until Ben thought Tom acted kind of queer,
And within his heart was filled with fear.
"Hello, Tom, what's the trouble there?"
"Why," says Tom, "we've struck it rich.
There's naught but pure gold here,

And if you can't believe me, come down and see
for yourself.
For, if my eyes don't deceive me,
We've got dope enough for both—and then some.
So here's one for the 'big outside,'
For a wife and a cute little home."
"I'm with you, Tom, we'll sell out to the 'Guggs'
For one hundred thousand dollars,
And no longer will we roam,
Because we don't have to now,
Nor put ourselves about."

Now I must tell you of my last trip to the outside, and I warn you to hold your hair on while I tell it. Then I will conclude with some things interesting about Alaska in general.

I append here, for the benefit of the reader, a list of the stopping places on the Government road, or mail stage line between Chitina and Fairbanks, on what is known as the winter route:

Chitina, 0; Poplar Lake, 4 miles; Nafsteds, 15 miles; Woodland, 27 miles; Willow Creek, 30 miles; Copper Center, 51 miles; Tazlina, 52 miles; Dry Creek, 67 miles; Gulkana, 77 miles; Poplar Grove, 89 miles; Sourdough, 99 miles; Our Home, 115 miles; Meiers, 125 miles; Paxsons, 138 miles; McCallums, 158 miles; Millers, 170 miles; Rapids, 181 miles; Donnellys, 195 miles; Gordons, 211 miles; Sullivans, 227 miles; Delta, 250 miles; Overland, 260 miles; Salchaket, 270 miles; Thirty-mile House, 282 miles; Bylers, 292 miles; Sixteen-mile House, 294 miles; Eight-mile House, 302 miles; Fairbanks, 310 miles.

CHAPTER XII.

IN PERIL ON THE YUKON.

MEMORABLE TRIP TO THE OUTSIDE—GETTING AWAY FROM FAIRBANKS—SOLITUDES OF THE YUKON—THE HERMON GROUNDS ON A SANDBAR—GETS FROZEN IN THE ICE WITH HER PASSENGERS—OPERATING AN OLD WIRELESS MACHINE FOR RELIEF—THE KLONDIKE TO THE RESCUE—ESCAPING ON THIN ICE—A VENTURE FOR LIFE.

AFTER having lived in the Land of the Midnight Sun and the wonderful Northern Lights for nine long years, facing and overcoming all kinds of hardships and tough luck, and wringing a measure of success out of a plentitude of adversity, and survived nine long, dreary, cold winters, I decided to take a trip to the "outside." My chief object for going was to take a course in music—a desire which had ruled me all my days. I found no opportunity for study and practice in Alaska. The reader already has seen how I earned the money for this purpose. He or she has seen how, when Mr. Mallinson got settled in mining, he employed, beginning with four or five, some fourteen miners, and as he needed a cook, I saw my opportunity.

I was not large nor overly strong, but I possessed a large, strong will power, and grappled with this task from 5 o'clock in the morning each day. It took some hard work to feed fourteen hungry roughnecks. In the mornings I found myself dishing up mush and cracking eggs, two to each man, frying potatoes, and turning over hot cakes as a side dish, and each roughneck (oh, I mean man) could easily devour six or eight cakes. So you see I had to be clothed and in my right mind even at that early hour to be ready at 6 a. m. And in they came, looking pretty rough and tough, but good at heart. Some would say: "Good morning," and some would not.

However, when this was over I would start in to wash up the dishes and get on my dinner and while that was working out its own salvation I would make cakes, cookies, bake bread, puddings and pies, roast meat, and prepare vegetables. So I was kept busy chasing around the kitchen and stove, doing what we termed up there as "The Greasy Two-step."

And, believe me, I didn't need any lullaby at 11 p. m. to put me to sleep. It seemed to me I had but hit the pillow when I heard a voice telling me to get up, which to me sounded as far off as heaven. Such was one day after the other for five long months.

Oh, I used to feel weary, weary—but it is a long lane that has no end—and the fall was upon us. Mr. Mallinson was about through his "rat-killing" (mining) and said to me: "You had better go outside and take a rest and get your heart's desire (music)."

On the 28th of September, 1913, I had put together all my belongings and was headed for Fairbanks, which was about fourteen miles off, for we were living on the creek called Goldstream, and had to go to Fairbanks on the train.

Mr. Mallinson's partner, named Mr. McLellen, a typical Irishman, was also going, and another man named Mr. Buckler, a brother-in-law of Mr. Mallinson. Mr. Mallinson charged them to look after me all along the way.

Well, when we got to Fairbanks the Northern Commercial Company told us that the boat would not go until the 3d of October, which is considered very late for the last boat to leave, and also very risky on account of the weather.

The boat on which we were to leave Fairbanks was down the river on her way up for us, but was fast on a sandbar with her boilers leaking and could not make good time. In order to make sure of the passengers going out safely we had to be taken down on the Tanana Valley Railroad, baggage and all, some twelve miles to a place called Chena, where the water was deeper and much wider, for from Fairbanks to Chena is but a tributary better known as the Slough.

Now, this was on Friday, October 4, and I don't know why, but somehow, something told me we were out for trouble. It reminded me of poor little David Copperfield. The longer he lived the more trouble he had, just because (as he claimed) he was born on Friday.

However, we got to Chena in good shape and were transferred to our boat about 10 a. m. This boat was called the Reliance, but to me she looked as if she had been given a wrong name, for she didn't look reliable enough to cope with our bunch, but it was only for two days and one night, so we really didn't mind it so long as we were going —yes, going—to the "big outside."

When we pulled out from Chena headed for the Yukon, for from Chena down to Fort Gibbon we were floating down the River Tanana, which empties into the mighty Yukon, it was cold and looking pretty dismal and snowing fast. And everybody looked sorry to see us leave, and especially the last boat, for that means frozen-up rivers and practical isolation for nine long months. We never know whether we will meet again, for a great deal can happen between partings and possible meetings. Hence it is, that conscious of this we part with pain, where friendship's ties are severed. We dislike to part with our dear, old friends for these reasons, and the wound of parting is never healed except by the palm of reunion.

But on we go until we come to Fort Gibbon, which is quite a large burg. I suppose the people would laugh at it, and us, too, for calling it a burg, or rather a camp of importance, but it is just the same.

It is here where we have the wireless station, and Government post, soldiers' post, and lots of stores. Among them is a branch store of the Northern Navigation Company, where the Indians do their trading, and the miners come from the outlying creeks for supplies, and also dispose of their furs and gold dust.

We arrived here on the 6th, 6 p. m., which looked pretty good to us for we were taken onto a larger boat called the Hermon. We were then assigned to our berths, and I had just dropped off to sleep when I was disturbed by some one coming in our stateroom—for there were only two in ours, myself and a lady by the name of Miss Plokki, a Finlander—and who should it be but a woman looking kind of kinky about the head, which, by the way, was red. I learned afterwards that she was known by the name of Rags. She was well named, all right, for she was Rags itself, but she was to stay with us and so climbed up to the top bunk and said nothing.

Now, the river boats then used wood to make steam, but this Hermon was an exception for she used crude oil. So, after we had taken on enough oil to do us the rest of our journey we pulled out, about midnight.

Oh, my! it looked so lonesome with only a few wild-eyed Indians hanging around, and the snow-clad hills lying on the outskirts of this camp; and the river running through slowly, just as if she were dreaming or feeling somewhat sleepy and were waiting for the weather man to come and tighten her all up for a long, big sleep.

All you could hear was a few Malamutes and Siwash dogs howling in the distance and the whispering of the pines and spruce trees. But on we go and all goes well until we come to a place called Ruby City.

But, talk about a Ruby! The city was looking more like a wild and woolly Indian camp than like a "Ruby" City. We had to stay over here until early morn on account of the flues in the boiler having sprung a leak, so we had to wait for the fire to cool off before the boys could work.

The captain told us we could go ashore and rubber around if we liked, so Mr. McLallen, Mr. Buckler, Mrs. Patterson, and my side partner, Miss Plokki, my room mate, took a stroll around this lonely Ruby. Oh, ye gods! we did not see much, for there is but one street in it, and the mud!—each foot would stick, and our shoes were about off, and our bones out of socket by the time we could get loosened up, only to be repeated, or to put the kibosh on all, we would slip down bodily. We sure looked as if we had gone through a mud contest.

However, the street was well lighted up by the lights in the saloons, where the miners had come in from the creeks and sat playing poker and blackjack around the tables, with their pokes of gold lying alongside of them. They themselves were looking like 1 o'clock half struck, with their eyes all bloodshot and talking in a haphazard way from overindulging in "hootch," better known as whiskey. Hootch is the Indian term for whiskey. The dancehall girls were helping them spend their money, and drinking champagne with their arms around the men's necks.

Ruby is built on the side of the Yukon. By the way, I forgot to mention that we were now on the Yukon, which is the route from Fort Gibbon down to St. Michael.

Next morning we awoke to find ourselves floating along, slow and steady, with about one hundred and fifty souls aboard, healthy and well and merry. Each day became colder, and our rooms were cold, which gave me a cold such as you read about, for we had on summer clothing, not thinking of needing anything very heavy, for as a rule on the last boat down we stay indoors most of the time.

The wind would blow up and down the valley and up the river. As we were right in the face of the wind the result was that we had its full force. There was not much to break the wind but our boat, so it would blow through every hole and crevice that was in the boat; and, believe me, there were many; and it would whistle and howl so mournfully, while we lay in bed trying to get warm.

In the daytime we would sit around the social hall, men and women together, for there was but one hall. Of course, most of the men smoked between meals and the weather would not permit them to sit outside on deck. It is needless to say that the atmosphere of the social hall became somewhat hazy and blue-looking from smoke.

We ladies could stand just so much and then we would put on our wraps and chase one another around on deck and on the barge that had been pushed ahead of us, for about twenty minutes. This was about all we could stand and would have to go inside again.

I tell you it felt good, smoke or no smoke, especially if it was bordering on mealtime, for we had excellent appetites.

So the days rolled by and all seemed merry under the circumstances; the men playing cards, or reading and sleeping and smoking between meals, and we ladies, who were nine all told—Mrs. Alberg, Mrs. Patterson, Miss Plokki, Mrs. Henrickson, Miss Maddox, Miss Berg, Dollie Belmont and Maurice Moschelle, and Rags—would sit and sew and occasionally take a notion to sing and josh a little. I proved to be the center of all amusement, for I generally had the floor, for between you and me, talking is my long suit. It's the only thing I shine in, so I was kept busy breaking the monotony.

I was working on a collar and cuff set, and how the boys used to love to watch my needle bobbing in and out on that work, and me at the same time

THE MALLINSON DUMP, SHOWING MR. AND MRS. MALLINSON.

talking so fast. It would make your head swim. The only time I would rest would be to laugh at my own jokes, and it goes without saying that everyone laughed with me. Until then I didn't know that I was talking loud enough for all to enjoy the benefit, nor did I realize that all were interested and paying close attention until I heard the big, hoarse laugh. And I would wonder what I had said, and would pull myself together from out of my reverie, for I'll admit I used to talk to myself sometimes, and I always did like to hear a sensible person talk, and I liked just as well to talk to a sensible person.

This I had arrived at from being very much alone up in the interior, living in the midst of spruce brush with the rabbits, the moose and the birds. I used to think it pretty tough not to have someone to talk back to me sometimes. This would only occur when Mr. Mallinson and myself got on the warpath. Then there was too much back talk, and of a different nature. Even this, if nothing else, broke the monotony.

However, the collar was taking on an improved look each day, and one of the boys said to me: "You don't expect to get that finished before you get to Seattle, do you?"

"Yes," I replied, "and several more pieces that I have in my grip."

"Well," he said, "if you get that through by that time I will buy you a swell box of candy, and if you don't you'll buy me a box of cigars."

"All right," I said, but down in my inwards I was sure I would win the candy, so it rested at that.

At last we came to a place called Marshall City, where it was reported gold had been found in paying quantities, and colors could be found from the grass roots down to bedrock. But none of the boys got off to investigate for we were all bent on getting back to God's country.

We went sailing along, watching the snow falling in large flakes the size of a dollar, and looking up at the beautiful mountains towering up as high as the skyline, for they both looked as though they were joined together. It looked very pretty, the green intermingled with the white snow and the gray skies hanging over all.

We had been gone from Fairbanks just one week, so this made it Friday when we arrived at a place called Kotlick. This is an Indian camp and there happened to be quite a number living there and at other places along the river. At these places we would go ashore and buy curios from the natives.

This place was also a wireless station, but as our boat was the last one to come down, it was abandoned for the winter. It was used only during the summer months for the benefit of the boats traveling upon and down. The signal boys came aboard on their way to Seattle, where they were assigned to new posts in different parts of the States.

During the night it became very foggy and very, very cold. Captain Young could not see where he was going, for at this particular place the Yukon widens out considerably. It is termed "The Yukon Flats." It is where the Yukon empties into Bering Sea.

The next morning we found ourselves high on a sandbar. There was a high tide that night and it was a task to keep in mid-channel when it was so dark and the tide mixed matters up more than ever. However, Captain Young assured us that we would get off the next night; there we sat, eating three good meals and looking wise. No tide came the next night and there was nothing to do but wait. There was too much water to get off and walk and not enough to float our steamer.

"Now, wouldn't that stop you?" said one of the boys. So in order to keep up our spirits the cooks and waiters got up a concert which was held inside of the covered barge. Of course we didn't expect to see and hear the likes of Melba and Kubelik, Caruso, etc., from local amateurs. It was a case of "Such as I have, give I unto thee."

We could not complain, for we were all right but not getting farther on our way. The only fear we had was that we might get frozen in by the ice, for by this time it was colder than ever. The wind would shave your face if you went outside. The longer we stayed the less chance we had, for through the night ice would form, but we could break our way through it provided it didn't freeze too thick, if only the tide would come to lift us off that bar. This was the main thing; but no, we had to stay with the boat for five days.

By this time the ice was meaning real business, and as no help was in sight, Captain Young persuaded the signal boys to walk over the ice to the old wireless station to see if they could not put up the apparatus and send messages for help, or else we would have seen our finish very soon. Off they went, three of them, with small packs of grub on their backs, over that thin ice, feeling their way with sticks in their hands for over a mile. They took a flag with them to raise on top of the pole so we could see if they got there safely, for it was a risky thing to do. It took them some three or four hours to get things in shape, but once in working order it took but ten minutes to receive several answers from Nome, St. Michael, Juneau, etc., and we were saved, thank God!

The N. C. C. Company at St. Michael sent word that they would send a boat right away for us, called the Klondyke. Back came the boys once more over that treacherous ice which would crack at every step. It just barely held up a man and that was all. You see, the Lord tempers the wind to "shore and land," and strengthens the back for the burden, and the men landed on board in good shape.

The wireless operators, with the crew and many of the passengers had been undergoing a hunger tobacco strike, and they took advantage, when on shore, to notify the Klondike that there was no tobacco on board the Hermon, and to bring a supply without fail. Hence, when the relief steamer came near enough for the purpose, the tobacco was transferred. This deliverance was duly appreciated. The boys—men—I call them all boys, were overjoyed, and they made the most of their pipes for hours.

Before this good news was reported some of the boys were talking seriously of walking back to Marshall City to see if there were any ground left to stake. In this case they would have had to mush it twenty miles overland. They reconsidered the case when it came down to grub, for they had none. Neither had we too much on board, for we did not know what we would need. So they perished the thought, for they could not get along through nine months of long, cold, dark and dreary winter such as they have in Alaska, without a good outfit and a warm cabin and some good bedding.

I said to them: "Boys, be British. Stay with the ship." In truth, there were specimens of all nations among us.

We rested on our oars, as it were, until the Klondyke came. Meanwhile the Indians came over the ice to trade with us. I remember giving some of the squaws and children some gum. Oh, they thought it was rich. Yes, sir, they would laugh all over their faces and chew that gum. They would say to me: "You all right. Me like you. You talk."

I said to the chief: "We come and stay with you all winter in your camp and eat smoked salmon?"

He said: "You bet you come. You stay lots and lots of moons. Me like you. You talk."

Lots of moons means all winter or time indefinite. They don't savvy months and years. Were you to ask them how old they were they would tell you so many moons.

By this time we were ice-bound and our crude oil very limited, and we could not pull out on our own powers even though a high tide would come. We hadn't enough to get up steam. Next day, sure enough, we could see some dim object just as far off as the eye could reach. All eyes were eagerly watching it as it advanced. It proved to be the long-looked-for Klondyke. The men put on their coats (those who had any) and went on deck.

Honestly, the poor souls were so excited they didn't know what they were doing. One would be pulling his cap in his vacantness until it would come in two. Another would only have one shoe laced and another, like as not, would have his coat wrong side out, and so on. Oh, glory, we laughed and we cried. I enjoyed it all, for I didn't care what happened so long as there was no loss of life.

Now, the company at St. Michael was wondering where we were, for the Victoria was waiting on us to take us down the Pacific to Seattle. She was supposed to be the last boat down for the winter.

By degrees the boat came within five miles of us. She looked good to us all for we were beginning to feel cold inside the boat. All the warmth we could get was from the boilers below us in the engine room. This was barely enough to keep us from freezing, and our captain and pilot were feeling rather anxious about us; for, all told, there were one hundred and fifty souls aboard, including officers, cooks, deckhands, waiters and first-class passengers. The boat could get no nearer on account of the ice. She tried to back up through the ice, but this idea had to be given up, for she was only just a hull of a boat and could not stand much rough usage. There she was, so near and yet so far. It never did seem as if the fates were as much against us as now, with help in sight and five miles of ice which was not strong enough for all of us to travel over in safety, and us stranded on the poor old Hermon. How to get to the Klondyke was more than I could figure out.

However, where there is a will there is a way. She stayed there, in among the ice floes, for twenty-four hours. Next morning we looked to see if it was a dream or if she was really there. We could scarcely believe our eyes of yesterday after a big sleep. But she was there all right.

We were almost afraid to breathe or look lest she should have pulled out without us, for she herself was in jeopardy in the midst of ice floes. She was liable to be frozen in also.

The following day the captain of the Klondyke walked over that five miles of thin ice to tell us if we cared to risk it we could walk or get left, for he could not risk it any longer. It was up to us to do this or walk overland sixty-five miles in that biting cold, and nothing to eat. Of course, the men could have gotten through somehow, but we ladies—ye gods! It looked as if we were up against the real thing. However, nothing daunting, this news was like touching a spark to powder. To see those roughnecks get a move on them was appalling. They were simply all agog in five minutes. They were turning out the contents of their grips and putting back in just the barest necessities so as to make them as light as possible. Trust a man to make things as easy as possible when he is pinched in a tight place. There were summer socks, white shirts and collars, soiled clothes galore, underwear and old shoes littered around the floor. It looked very much as if there had been a rummage sale. They had talked it over and were bent on walking over that ice if they had to die in the effort.

But nothing doing with Dutch. He was going to take everything with him, and so he did. While feeling his way over he broke through up to his neck. How he ever got out is yet to be told, for he was out before we could take our next breath, regardless of his stoutness and superfluous weight and shortness of legs. Back to our boat he came and unpacked his bundles (which were as large and as heavy as he) and put on dry clothes to try it once more. When he started he was doing some tall talking to himself. He had but gone a full hundred yards when he again went through up to his neck, but out he got and secured his suitcase and bundles and kept going, wet or no wet.

You see, he had on leather shoes, and the ice was just like glass, and the weight of himself and his baggage proved too much for the ice underneath him. He got to the edge of the ice and was taken in a rowboat and was rowed in and out of ice packs alongside of the Klondyke, for she had to stay in the swiftest current in order to keep from becoming frozen fast.

Now, on account of Dutch falling through the ice, this made the ice weak all around for us to walk over. Oh, my Lord, it was a hair-raising time for all of us. When it comes down to a case of this kind it is every man for himself and they don't care a continental for anything. Nothing stops them.

The boys got busy tearing up gunny sacks to wrap around their feet to answer for moccasins to prevent slipping. When they could get no more sacks they tore up blankets to serve the purpose and so it went on, begging and lending from one another and making the most of everything that would help them along.

CHAPTER XIII.

IN AWFUL PERIL.

SELF LIFE-SAVING EFFORTS ON THE YUKON ICE—FORSAKEN BY INDIANS AND LEFT TO SPEND THE NIGHT AT A CAMP FIRE—THE RESCUE—TRANSFERRED TO ANOTHER BOAT IN MID-OCEAN—THE ARRIVAL AT ST. MICHAEL.

THE preceding chapter leaves us in a struggle to walk over five miles of dangerously thin ice, to board the Klondike. It was a hazardous undertaking. As the ice was too thin to be safe, the passengers found it dangerous to try to carry their effects. They searched the deck and hold of the Hermon to find planks, or anything in the wood line, to make little sleds so as to take their grips and knapsacks with them. This was the only way to do it, for then the weight came after them; so there they were hammering and sawing. Their hands were so cold that they could scarcely hold the hammer or nail. They would have to stand up every few minutes and clapp their hands in order to finish. However, they eventually got through and off we went, saying "Good-by" to the captain and officers who had to stay to put things away for the winter on the boat, such as silver, bedding, life belts, etc.

Now, believe me, there was some slipping and falling around over that large expanse of ice. It surely would have made a fine moving picture show. The people had to keep away from each other lest they might prove too heavy. They kept agoing with a large stick or piece of plank in their hands to hold them up, and declaring that if they got safely home in dear old California they would be contented. One would say: "Here's one that had a good home and left it"; and: "Here's another from Tennessee, and I'll thank God if I get there and never more will I roam for gold. I tell you that. Eh, they talk of Alaska, the Golden North. Such a God-forsaken country, Give me the orange orchards of the Sunny South."

On they went, humping along, with faces as white as death, with the ice cracking and bending at each step. It would crack for yards around, and there was the deep, icy cold Yukon swiftly flowing beneath them with only an inch or so holding them up. Yes, it was really no time for "chewing the rag," as they say. This is the time you can size up a real man after you have hiked alongside of him on a trip like this. If he is good humored and good natured under these conditions, then this is the man Alaska is proud of, and she needs a great many of them, for these are the backbone of Alaska with her millions of dollars waiting to be discovered, to open up the country that is only at present in its infancy.

On the other hand, there are lots of men that go up there that should never have left their mothers and homes. They are continually finding fault with everything and always scenting trouble. As the Scotch people say, "They hae their doots."

Now, we ladies were to be taken in a gasoline launch that plowed her way through to the edge of the ice. Well, the fates were still against us, for there were nine of us and the launch would hold but seven. Miss Plokki and myself got left behind, but our grips went on at the same time in a rowboat. The captain told us we had better go back to the Hermon until they could come back for us. It was fearfully cold and we were thinly clad from top to toe, and had the thinnest kind of shoes on, so back we two went.

By this time the night was on us, for the days are very short there at this time of the year. I was glad to be back on the dear old Hermon, off that ice, for with me it's any port in a storm. I think it all happened for the best, for the launch got stuck and sprung a leak. In came the ice water and prevented the engine from working, so they could not help themselves. There was ice water around their feet which had to be bailed out as fast as it came in. This was caused by the ice floes bumping against the sides of the boat. It was now too dark to see where they were. They were about one mile from the Klondyke and a few rods from the ice edge. They were in this perilous condition for four hours, hungry and stiff with cold, for they had had nothing to eat since 12 a. m. It was now 8 p. m. At last the Klondyke, knowing the predicament of these ladies, manned a barge and after four hours of anxiety, the distance between was safely navigated, and the ladies were taken aboard and the barge abandoned.

By this time the ice floes were getting frozen together, which put the "kibosh" on them coming for us. They decided to wait until the morning to see if they could get us and all the crew, and a few men who had backed out at the last minute, and who now thought they would take a chance in going with us. The bags and suitcases were all rounded up and safely aboard—all but the trunks. They were still on the Hermon.

I think we were just as well off in our old haunt, the Hermon, until morning. The head steward ordered one of the waiters to tidy up the warmest stateroom, which was right over the engine room, for us, so that after we had eaten our suppers we could roll in for the night. But before I did I took a peep out to look at the Klondyke all lit up in her glory, away out, six miles or more, shining out in the dark night. The peace and quietness that prevailed would almost make you feel awe-stricken. Were you ever in a place where silence almost scared you? Well, that was how it was there. Just mountains, and the Klondyke in yon waters was all, with the black sky overhead. After telling myself that all was surely well with those aboard the Klondyke, I turned in to bed and plunged into oblivion.

But, lo and behold, it was not all well with her. She had to keep moving around all the time to keep from freezing and she, too, sprung a leak. She had a huge hole in her side even with the water line, caused by the ice jams. As luck would have it, there was a boat called the Louise about two miles off. She had come from St. Michael to see what had become of the Klondyke, for the Victoria refused to wait longer than the following day. She came to see if she could hurry us along. The Klondyke blew distress whistles, but owing to the contrariness of the wind we could not hear. We could not have been any help to her anyhow. The Louise sensed the trouble.

By the time the Louise came alongside she sure looked good to the crowd, for by this time the deck was nearly all awash and the boat was sunk six feet. There didn't seem to be any excitement. The combined pumps of the two boats soon gained on the leak. In an hour or so, with the two boats lashed together, they made their way to Stebbins Point, where a half day was lost as a high wind was blowing in St. Michael Harbor. In the evening, the Meteor, another boat, took them to St. Michael, and in a few hours they were aboard the Victoria wending their way Seattleward without us. But as they went they saw the same old Klondyke going back after us after having been repaired. She was strengthened with planks and sheet iron and had dogs and sleds aboard to get us. Her lights looked good to the weary marchers trying to reach her.

It was really lucky that no one lost their lives as the ice would barely hold a man's weight. Thus the first crowd got out.

Now we were left alone. We could do nothing but be patient until the Klondyke came to our rescue. The ice was still freezing farther out than ever. Our oil was so low now that we could scarcely keep warm, and at mealtime the food would become cold before the waiters could serve it.

It seemed to us that we were forsaken all right, after being used to much company, but I was not alone for I still had Miss Plokki with me. Just we two ladies and about fifty men. Needless to say, we two had everything our own way. As our suitcases had gone with the boat, I felt lost for I didn't have my sewing. Neither did we have a comb or brush to fix our hair, and nothing to sleep in. In fact, we had nothing but what we stood up in.

The second day we were looking kind of woolly and hard to curry, so I said: "Boys, you must excuse our appearance for we have no toilet articles whatever."

"Well," said the captain, "if you will not object to using mine I will lend them to you."

"Object!" I said, "well, I guess not. It's a case where one shares half his kingdom."

Off he went up to his seventh heaven (in the pilot house) and brought them to us, and you bet we kept them until we got our own. Now, you see, I had all the talking to do—which, of course, I did not mind—for Miss Plokki could not speak very plain English. As all the boys declared, they felt like shaking hands with their feet because it was really me that was left. I was never found wanting when it came down to talking, and it kept them in good spirits. As I was blessed with an abundance of "seeing the funny side of things," we were gay.

On the Hermon, as in every part of Alaska where I resided, I was considered the leaven of life, spirit and amusement of all those in whatever party I belonged to, and the present circumstance was no exception. I told the stories, sang the songs, read the fortunes from tea grounds, and kept the game going, no matter what it was. The passengers had come to look upon me as the life of the steamer, and I had to confess that such was the truth. In the meantime, there were three days before us after the Hermon had stranded on the sandbar in which we could not hope for relief, so it was up to me to forget our situation and to cause the others to do the same. I made my best effort to turn everything in amusement and various kinds of entertainments. I helped the boys of the crew to put away things for the winter, such as the curtains, life-savers, bedding, silverware, and the like. It was very cold, and I was compelled to work with a heavy coat on, which was loaned me by one of the deckhands.

I asked Miss Plokki to assist us in the work, feeling that it would keep up her spirits and assist her in keeping warm. "No," she said, "the idea of my working after paying $100 first-class passage and get left at that. Nothing doing. What do you take me for?"

"I take you for a woman who wishes to keep warm! If you hang around in a state of grouch you will freeze. If you cheer up and jolly up and hustle a bit, you will profit by it, and feel better."

"Well, I don't care," she said, "I won't work for nobody just to keep warm!" And she didn't do a thing but worry the already worried captain, asking him when the Klondyke would arrive. She became the object of ridicule and laughter, and suffered from the cold more than those who hustled. But we all suffered from the cold and managed to keep warm by hard work, and it was in this that we found hard work to be a blessing.

I indulged in a good deal of fortune-telling each afternoon or evening, using tea grounds as indicators of coming events. I made the innocent grounds settling in the bottoms of tea cups tell some horrible troubles. I told the captain one day that in three days we would all be safely relieved and saved from our peril. He threw up his hat in great glee, and, sure enough, the prediction came true. On one occasion I told the captain that he had a brother who would die in a short time, and this also turned out to be true, only that instead of a brother, the man was a close friend and chum of the captain. His remains were taken down to Seattle on the Northwestern, and the captain was along with us on that occasion. He came to me on the trip and told me all about it. He really believed my fortune-telling was not all a myth.

It was three days before we could see any sign of help, and we were beginning to think the folks at St. Michael had forgotten us, but we didn't lose any sleep over that. We kept busily at work. The pilot, Mr. Moran, saw how blue I was getting, notwithstanding my spirit of push and work, and he asked me to put on one of his coats. "O yes," I told him. On went the coat and I felt that I had received absolution. Really I felt warm and all "puffed up" in that coat, and I did look fine in it. It was a coat that he wore while on duty. It was of navy blue cloth with a military collar. It had lots of pockets and was trimmed with gold braid, with the same colored coat of arms and gilt buttons. I looked like an officer and the other officers would come and ask me the orders of the day and doff their caps to me as though I were a distinguished personage. It really was fun in the midst of the cold.

Being English myself, I used to go to the kitchen and make afternoon tea, and those favored with my production thought it was "just it." The regular cooks handed out cakes to go with the tea, and to show my appreciation of this, I said:

"Come along, boys, and I'll tell your fortune." So there was a lot of spinning tea cups and a divining into the future, which, when the past was referred to many would be ready to declare its accuracy. However, they all liked the dope. Finally I noticed the captain setting at one side, and I volunteered to tell him his fortune. He consented.

"Well," I said, "it looks as if you were going to have trouble when you get to St. Michael, for some one is now making complaint against you. And it seems to me that you are going to hear of a very dear friend's death, or to me it looks almost like a brother, and he is lying dead in St. Michael right now. We will be off this boat, Captain, in three days."

"Now I know that you are just yarning, for I have no brother in Alaska and all my best friends are well and O. K., but," he said, "we will wait and see."

However, they were always ready to give me afternoon tea so as to get their fortunes told, and, as a result, I was kept reading tea cups. In truth, they thought nothing was too good for the "little Englishwoman," as they called me.

The captain by this time had a private hunch that the boat would soon be in sight, so he got the Indians to hitch up their dogs and sleighs and take all the trunks over the ice, a trunk at a time, and put them on a bluff as close to the ice as possible, in order that they would be easy to get at when the boat was sighted. There were about twelve Indians dressed up in their winter parkas and mucklucks and fur mitts and caps, and about six sleds with four dogs to each sled, running those trunks over the ice. The Indians had skates and to see them skating behind those sleds would put a white man to shame. They travelled faster than the dogs. They worked like Trojans.

It was beginning to look serious now, my friend. Three days gone and alone and no ghost of a sign of getting away. Our grub was getting low and so was the wood for the kitchen stove. The days grew colder hourly. We had no clothes fit for starting out to mush it sixty-five miles.

But, lo and behold—next morning we spied the dear old Klondyke about ten miles ahead. Oh, we gave a big warwhoop, I tell you. We made preparations to start for her. We had ten miles of ice to navigate—twice as much as the first crowd had, but the ship could not come nearer. After lunch the captain ordered the Indians to come and take us in the sleds. They also took about twenty sacks of United States mail, besides bullion from Fairbanks banks, and pokes of gold in care of the Wells Fargo Express Company, and one sled with bread and bacon, canned meat, coffee, tea and cooking utensils and some blankets in case we had to Siwash it out all night, for it was doubtful whether we would make the boat that night.

When we were all packed up nicely in our sled, that is, Miss Plokki, Mr. Anderson, who was sick and lame and who couldn't take any chances on walking lest he should fall by the wayside, and I, the Indian said: "Mush on there," to the dogs. They had gone but a hundred yards or so when they stopped. The Indian went to see what the trouble was, only to find that the ice was giving way and letting the water through, what we call overflow. He shouted back to the captain: "Indian no go; ice no strong."

"Oh, Lord, have mercy on us," I thought, "will we ever see civilization again?"

Now, we always allow an Indian to know best in cases like this for they understand all things pertaining to Alaskan waters, and the best ways to navigate in all weathers, and all seasons of the year. You cannot force them to go against their will.

The captain said: "Oh, that's nothing. Go on. That's only just a bum spot. Hurry up the dogs and you'll be over that quicker than you can shake a dead lamb's tail."

Mr. Indian would not budge, and out we had to get and walk through three inches of water on top of the ice. One of the boys had given me a pair of old socks to draw over my shoes to save me from slipping. At any other time men's cast-away socks would not have appealed to me, but they were the most priceless things in this instance that could have been given me on God's green earth. They were white ones at that, and I surely looked like a pup with white paws. The captain lent me his gloves, for which I was thankful. With men's gloves and socks tramping along I had to ask myself what I was.

As we mushed along my feet got wet, socks and all, but we had to go through it all. Now and then we would hear the ice crack for yards around each one of us. I would stop right in my tracks and yell. Up to this time I thought that I had lung trouble, but to hear me yell proved to me that my lungs were more than normal. The men would shout to me for God's sake not to stop but to keep on the go at all hazards; and not to run back for I might be cut off from the bunch. If the ice broke through I surely would be sucked in under, and that would be the end of me, and if I kept on the move I would be over the bad place before I'd realize it. Nevertheless, each time it cracked I would stop and yell. The men had sticks or planks, or some piece of lumber to walk with and they would come within a few yards and give me a push. After this one good man walked my pace with me, he holding to one end of his piece of lumber about three yards long and me at the other end, looking as if we expected some one to come along to jump over.

To hold on to something gave me confidence.

Miss Plokki, I firmly believe, was made of cast iron or rubber, for she went alone, humping along a hundred yards from anyone. Nothing seemed to scare her in the least. I don't think she realized the danger, and I didn't feel inclined to enlighten her on the subject. Some of the men had faces blanched as white as almonds and their eyes bulged out like billiard balls. None of us knew the moment when we would go through, and there would be no one left to tell the tale. There was not much said, although each one of us was doing some tall thinking, I tell you. There I was with my life in jeopardy and Mr. Mallinson up in Fairbanks thinking that I was nearing Seattle on the Victoria.

By this time we were over the most dangerous part of the Yukon, that is, the deepest part, so I took courage and gazed upon the hills and said to myself: "I look up to the hills from whence cometh my help." And trying to forget that I was on dangerous ground, and as all fears as well as all joys come to an end, we came along to the shore line. The sled and dogs were waiting for us. We jumped in and rode for miles more until night was upon us. As the ice was more solid near the shore line it was more slippery. The strong wind would blow us around—dogs, sled and all, like billiard balls. But the dogs on the outside, getting turned around, seemed to hold their own. They never fell down. The Indians themselves kept jawing away to one another in their own lingo, but I did not understand what they said, and as the poet puts it:

> "Where ignorance is bliss,
> 'Tis folly to be wise."

Once in a while we would look back and take a look at the poor old Hermon fast in the ice, looking so lonesome, and I was touched with pity in my heart. If she could have spoken, I imagined she would have told us: "You are deserting me after bringing you thus far. Now I feel like a bird with a broken pinion wedged in this ice and cannot help myself. Now I am left alone to live it out by myself through nine cold and dreary months."

By this time we had met some Indians on their way home from taking Mr. Moran, the head steward, and one deckhand before daybreak that morning, about fifteen miles farther up so they could have camp ready for us. I didn't learn of this until now. They watched their chance to tell our Indians not to take us any farther because they felt sure the big tide would come that night. Yes, the big tide that we looked for to take us off the sandbar. If it did come it would be all off with the Indians getting back to camp that night, for they were about twelve miles off.

They dumped us off on the side of the Yukon and refused to take us a yard more. They turned their dogs around and headed for home and left us to make the most of it and do the best we could. There we were, blankets, cooking pots, grub, mail, the Wells Fargo valuables, gold bricks, bullion, and pokes of gold dust. Of course, the purser off the boat took charge of the valuables and kept an eagle eye on all, with a revolver ready at a moment's notice, in case anyone wanted to be ugly and mean. Truly, it would be tempting to some men, but they were all of them perfect gentlemen in every respect, and to we ladies they could not have been more loyal. They were at our beck and call to make it as comfortable as they could for us.

The boys went up and down the beach line and gathered driftwood, made a fire, and made coffee, while the cook cut bacon in slices, a whole slab at a time, on somebody's valise, to serve as a table. Another cut bread, and another opened up canned meat.

While this was cooking I looked around for Miss Plokki, in the gloaming, and there she was, all humped up in a bunch, sitting on an old stump, with her umbrella jammed in the moss. Resting on it was her hat, which looked to me like Miss Plokki No. 2. Oh, I wanted to laugh the worst way.

Supper was now ready, and there was not one of us who did not heartily thank the Lord for this, because we had not had a mouthful to eat since breakfast, and had been exposed to many hardships and much fatigue. We ladies were served first. It was a piece meal, all measured out to us, two slices of bread, two of bacon. Oh, never did bacon sandwich taste sweeter. I could have eaten a dozen, but alas, we were on rations, for we didn't know how long we would be Siwashing it, and had to go easy.

Now, from all that bacon there were two frying pans full of grease. The cook was going to throw it away, but I checked him in time, and said: "Let's all dip our dry bread in it and use it up; it will taste better and help to keep us warm." And I gently warned them of the saying, "Waste not, want not." "Hurrah," said they, and all fell to dipping their bread in that hot grease. You bet it was good, as we were very hungry.

Next came the dishing out of coffee. It was boiling hot, for it had sat in the middle of the fire, and we had to use our caps or mitts to take hold of the handle. But lo and behold, we had no cups. I thought of the pie plates lying on the moss and said:

"Here, boys, let's drink from out of the pie plates." And they said: "Happy thought, little woman, you seem to think of everything."

It would have made a good picture to see us with those plates of boiling hot coffee up to our face in one hand, around that fire in the dark, and our bread and bacon in the other hand. I shall never forget how the boys thus sat swapping yarns of by-gone days of '98 in the stampede to Dawson. Honestly, I enjoyed it all, for some of it was very amusing.

After supper, Red, one of the boat's crew, rustled wood. He was trying to break a limb of a large tree with another limb which served as an ax, with his foot holding steady the other. This boy was very witty and humorous when he chose. He said, "It's all well and good for Robert Service, who wrote the book called 'The Spell of the Yukon,' to say, 'Oh, God, how I am stuck on it all,' for to Mr. Service the Alaskan life was very alluring. Yes," said Red, "the mutt, he should be here now. I'll bet he would not be so optimistic in this case, and I'll bet a doughnut to a dollar (and I'd rather have the doughnut just now than the dollar) that he never became frozen up in this shape in the ice, with no bed to lie on more than a jack rabbit."

However, he was piling up the wood on the already huge fire, and all of us were in the best of spirits. We felt as independent as a hog on ice. Just because we could do nothing else, we acquired this independence, I presume. It was so quiet in the darkness, outside our own voices, that you could easily imagine how Adam and Eve must have felt when they had all the face of the earth to wander around in, and everything their own way. We were surrounded with chains of mountains some two or three miles off, perhaps. All we could see was the Klondyke in the distance all illuminated up in the dark, some ten miles off, churning around to keep the ice floes off from mid-channel, also to keep the water agitated so it would not freeze so quickly.

The Captain could see our fire, for it looked like a lighted beacon, so they knew that we were alive. Indeed we were very much alive and in the flesh, at that. Now we were beginning to settle down for the night and make the most of it. But the moss was cold, for the ground was frozen, there was ice right under the grass roots. Even though we did have blankets to sit on, we were chilled clear through to the bone; and the chills would be chasing up and down our backs like the skimmering of the Northern Lights in winter. Our faces were roasted, so to speak, not saying anything about our eyes being nearly smoked out. Our eyes looked as if we had been weeping over the event; as they were smoked red.

We made good use of the sacks of mail. We used them for pillows. Half a dozen heads on one sack and a blanket over their feet. We looked like soldiers recruiting, and some of the boys slept even so, and actually snored, while others said that the feathers were hard. Miss Plokki and I were together. There was no sleep in me —far from it, I tell you. However, peace reigned supreme, but I didn't hear any prayers said, so I guess there were none said.

After supper, when all was quiet and we were trying to rest, we heard footsteps. It was Mr. Moran and the Indian guide and deckhand who had started before us at daybreak.

Mr. Moran asked me if I'd care to go up to their camp, as it was much more convenient and more pleasant. He said: "Do you think you could hold out five miles more?"

"Why, yes," I assured him. Had he forgotten I was a true Briton?

He laughed and said: "Come along, for this is why we came—to take you up to our camp. We could see your fire and were wondering why you didn't keep coming until you made our camp."

We told him that those loons of Indians balked and refused to go any farther. So, sure enough, I picked up my bits of things I had with me, and my pillow—oh, yes, that was my Elijah. I couldn't possibly leave that. Miss Plokki followed suit and picked up her hat that had up to now sat on the umbrella jammed in the moss. Here she came, umbrella and all, and off we went, leaving the boys there.

I said: "This is better than sitting around, and to walk five miles will help to shorten the night, and we'll be that much nearer the Klondike in the morning." So we went, just as the lazy old moon came peeping over the hill, with one eye only, just as if she were enjoying the joke immensely. It enabled us to see our way a little better. Finally we reached camp, and as Mr. Moran said, it was more comfortable than Camp No. 1. We sat down by the fire and drank tea, for Mr. Fenton, head steward, had obeyed orders all right. By this time we heard voices, and, sure enough, those boys had followed us, that is, all those who didn't have anything to carry. "Nothing doing," they said, "if this camp is good enough for the ladies, it will suit us down to the ground."

Now, toward 2:00 A. M. next day, the wind changed warmer, and, sure enough, came the high tide. It came out from under the edge of the ice and we could hear the ice breaking and cracking fiercely. This was enough to know that we had gotten over that ice just barely in time. The Indians were right, as always, for they study the sun, moon, and the locations of the winds, etc., and are seldom mistaken. This is what they were pow-wowing about just before they left us. I was glad they were safely home, and in bed, I guess. But with us the night was long and cold. We could only hear what was going on over in the Yukon, some two hundred yards away.

The nights are long in October, and in the meantime the boys took turns getting wood and building up the fire. Some would sleep for a spell while others rustled wood. Then they would get tired and lie down and the others would get up. So the night wore on, with increasing noise and activity in the river. By the time daylight came the Yukon was a mass of ice floes and open water. The swift channel took them with all force against the poor old Klondyke, which was, at this time, in a perilous condition.

The sun began to rise and the morning dawned bright and fair. I got up to walk around, for I was feeling stiff and numb from sitting in the same position. I took a stroll along the beach and watched the ice piling up on the beach, bank high.

Meantime, some gink, seeing my pillow, and what a comfortable place I had, laid himself down to sleep. When I got back he was snoring to beat the band. I suppose telling the old folks at home all about the continual round of trouble and hard knocks he had survived. I said to myself: "Go to it, my friend, and keep it up; I don't think you can overdraw the situation." And so he was left to his imagination, uninterrupted.

The cooks fried the bacon and cut bread, as before, on some poor fellow's valise. It smelled delicious, but I never could eat an early morning breakfast. Besides, I had not slept, and felt somewhat tired and of no account. But I would have given a dollar for one good cup of tea or coffee, to put a little vim into my bones. But, oh, dear, those huddlehum Indians had taken all the tea and coffee. I didn't partake of breakfast in the least; besides, there was not a quarter enough for the men. I thought: "Let them have it; they will need their strength before the day is out to pull themselves through, and maybe pull me also." I pulled myself together best I could, although I felt pretty slim on the inside, my friends, for it was not much I had eaten since we left the Hermon, twenty-four hours past, with a great deal of hard traveling and exposure on the side.

By this time some wallopers had come up from Camp No. 1. The purser had to stay on account of the heavy junk he had to take care of until the Indians came back. They were to start out at early morn to bring all the trunks with them, for we had passed the trunks some eight miles back, for we had to go much farther than we had anticipated. The captain told them to bring along the trunks, for he thought one more night's freezing would enable them to travel in safety, and could soon whizz along on glare ice, like glass, for eight or ten miles, in less than two hours. Then there would be nothing to it. But here was the ice all broken up, and open water.

The Indians came, anyway, along the beach line, and the captain's and officers' trunks with them; but ours—well, they could go to thunderation, I suppose, for all they cared. They intended having theirs if possible, even if it did wear out a few dogs and Indians. What did that matter? There were lots more dogs and Indians, too, growing up. Dogs and Indians were cheap, anyway. Here they came, purser and all his valuables, Indians and trunks. It was hard for the poor dogs, running a sled over hard ground minus snow or ice. I guess we looked kind of ill-kept, having sat up all night, and having no comb or our faces washed. We had to give up the captain's brush and comb for him to pack. When the animal (oh, I mean the man) that slept on my pillow had gotten through telling (dreaming) the old folks at home all about it, I took off the pillow slip and went down to the side of the river and washed my face and hands, and drew on my imagination for a towel out of a pillow slip.

It is said you can imagine your bread, meat, and your water and wine, when you are up against it. The cold water helped some, all right, for I didn't feel so hook-and-eyed as I did beforehand. I think I enjoyed it after all. I had heard the boys, at various times, speak of how they mushed and Siwashed it when on a big stampede, and I longed to experience a trip of this kind. Little did I think that I would have my longings gratified, for I got more than I had yearned for.

It was now 11:00 A. M. We were still on the side of the hill and no sign of the Klondyke coming any nearer. We could not get to her now without a rowboat. We had nothing to do but to wait. Pretty soon we saw the captain of the Klondyke coming down the beach line, walking in a hurry. He came to ask us if we would walk up about five miles where the river was much broader and the ice floes more scattered.

We had to take to the trail, so to speak, and mush it five miles more, over nigger heads (tufts) and beach wood, sometimes on the beach, sometimes we had to get up on the banks, for in places the beach was narrow, or rather, the river flowed out more, which left little or nothing to walk on. So it was up and down, walking out of our way, in order to get over and around things. All on an empty stomach, for I missed the hot cup of tea Mr. Mallinson used to give me before I got up in the morning at home. Life was too short to kick against the pricks. We were encouraged by the fact that we would eventually get aboard the Klondyke before nightfall. So we didn't care a toss up.

Miss Plokki came right along beside me, stumping along with her umbrella, which took the place of a cane. Yes, she clung to me like my shadow. And you know you can't get away from that, very easily. The only time I know of is when you are in the dark.

One of the men, called Mr. Murphy, said to me: "Of all people to talk, you are the beat. I thought I could keep going some, but you are my Waterloo."

"Well," said I, "talk's cheap—and I never do get talked out anyway. Never did I have so much to talk about as now. I will find more by the time I get to the Seattle wharf, and then I'll have to begin all over again, telling the people all about this continual round of pleasures."

"Pleasures!" said he, "do you call this pleasure? Well, I should smile, you got your n-e-r-v-e. Wait till I get at them—I'll tell them in a few words what I think it is, and it won't look very good in print, what I say."

"Tut, tut," I said; "you'll forget all about it when you meet all your old-time friends at the wharf and they'll pat you on the back of the neck and say: 'Come on, my old college chum; have a high-ball on me.' "

"Oh, Lord," he said, "I think we have had high-balls enough lately."

I said: "You'll go around taking in the sights and moving picture shows, auto rides, counting the chicken feed (nickels and dimes) to see if you can count a dollar's worth of 'em all in one breath, eh?"

"Oh," he said, "you're the limit. I don't think I could keep up with you." "But," he said, "are you married?"

"Why, yes," I replied. "Don't I look married?"

"Well, no, now that you ask me, you don't. I took the other lady to be married, and you single."

"Well," I said, "you are all turned around. I am married and she is single. We only want a few things to happen on this trip to complete a novel story and one of them is to have a love story scene. She will have to be the one to be wooed and won. See?"

We were getting to the end of our last mile. We were very thirsty and tired, and were keeping our eyes, right and left, open to find some spring water. At last, one of the boys spied some—a little creek emptying into the Yukon. He looked around and found an old rusty milk can that some one had left when passing along that way before. Or maybe it had washed up from past tides gone by. However, we drank, and I said to the boys: "Nothing beats the pure unadulterated Adam's ale (water), the most delightful beverage."

"Yes," they all agreed, "nothing fits the bill like water."

Now we were at the end of our foot travels, at least for a while. There were two rowboats to take us alongside of the Klondyke. The men in care of them came ashore in rubber hip boots, for they could not bring the boats close to the edge of the water for us. One said: "Ladies, excuse me, but I'll have to carry you both on my back, being as you cannot walk through this water to the boat. I must not bring her any nearer because I can't get her afloat again if I do."

Miss Plokki looked at me kind of bleary-eyed, if you know how that is—what I call doubtful. It was up to me to take the one-man-back-ride. He turned his back to me and said:

"Come on, lady, get up."

I don't know how I did get up, but this I know, I was up and going bumpety bump, on the man's back, through three feet of ice water. He said: "Hold up your feet, you'll get wet."

Well, I didn't know how long I was, or rather, how tall I was, until he told me my feet were hanging, and to help matters, he was a little, sawed-off outfit of an animal.

The boys were on the shore enjoying the scene, and when he put me down in the dory boat, he said: "Why, that's easy, you don't weigh much over a good hundred, I bet my boots to that." I said nothing, for it was not worrying me just then what I weighed.

Next came Miss Plokki and more laughter from the shore. Then it was a show fit for the gods to see these two boatmen carrying the other huddlehums, for none of them wanted to take to walking through the water. Finally we were all taken on the Klondyke, actually aboard, at last. I could scarcely believe my ears and eyes, but we were sure there, all right.

All the crew came to the side to look at us (I know I looked like a wild woman), for they didn't expect to see ladies. They thought that we were all a rough bunch of roughnecks and sourdoughs. But when they saw us, they looked sorely grieved and took on a mournful look, for I guess we looked like the "last run of shad," or as if we had been shot at and missed.

Up we had to climb a rope ladder, holding on like grim death. I began to wonder by this time what next was coming in the way of transfers, for it seemed to me that we were trying all of the latest stunts in the transfer business. But as they say that "Variety is the spice of life," I came to the conclusion that I must need variety, and that it must be good for me.

We landed upon deck and all the other mules (men) coming behind. The first thing that greeted me was the smell of coffee and soup. Oh, glory, I wanted to make a bee-line to the kitchen for a taste of one of 'em. Even the cook came along in his white apron, but, after all, black apron, a large knife in his hand, somewhat vacant looking. I guess he was meditating seriously or else he would not be coming forth with knife in hand.

I made good use of my opportunity of speaking with him, on what was the chance of getting a hot drink of coffee, feeling assured that he would give it to me without hesitation. However, he did hesitate, and told me lunch would be served at half-past twelve. Oh, I felt limp all at once, but someone came along to show us to our room, both of us in one stateroom. So there I stayed, grateful, indeed, to be in a nice, clean room with a tempting bed.

After refreshments and a good sleep I arose and got ready for supper and felt I could do it ample justice, and I surely did, and it did me good and helped me, too.

By this time the sun was setting in the west and a very red sky indicated, as ever, cold weather to follow. Yes, there was old Sol going down behind the mountain. He had already retired up to his eyes, for this was all that was left of him. I thought, with my imaginative turn of mind, him to be saying to us: "Well, I've stayed by you all day, and I shall now leave you to do the best you can. So make the most of it, and if you are alive in the morning I'll see you. Otherwise, fare thee well," and down he goes, and didn't wink his eyes at us any more that night; and, in his place, came along the old lady, the moon, and to me, I took her to say: "God bless my heart and soul, are you still here?"

"Yes," I said, "we are still here, and will be until morning," for the boat was going to risk one more night to see if they could get the trunks aboard, thinking, maybe, if it turned cold enough and the wind got around to the north, it would blow the ice out into the water from the shore and it would freeze together again. Sometimes it will do this, but I couldn't tell whether it would do it all in one night or not. We churned around, around, around, all night. I awoke in the night and told my fool self that they were headed for St. Michael, only to find in the morning that we were practically in the same place and could still see the remnants of our old campfire smoldering a little.

The Indians were aboard already and could not bring the trunks. It was too risky, for the ice had flowed out quite a little from shore, and it was none too strong. The captain coaxed them to bring their trunks, some half-dozen, all told, as far on the ice as they could, and they would send a dory boat to meet them.

After some deliberation they consented and were successful in coming with them, but it was all they could stand, for just as the poor Indians were turning homeward for shore, one broke through, dogs and all—three of them. Fortunately he had the sense to hold on to the sled handles until another Indian came to his rescue, which was dangerous for him to stand on the weak ice, and especially to pull up another half-drowned Indian. But they made it some way; but the dogs and sled went down the Yukon. The current just dragged them under and down, down, down they went to their doom.

There was no other salvation for them, and it was the lucky Indian he was to save his own life. The old idea was given up of getting those trunks, so there they sat about sixty-five miles from St. Michael, and about eleven hundred miles from Fairbanks.

We then steamed away for St. Michael, but as our boat was getting unsafe, we had to be transferred to the Meteor in open water.

There was only one stateroom on the Meteor, to accommodate the captain. One small lounge and writing desk, a clothes closet and a strip of carpet were about all there was in it. It really could not hold more, for to me it didn't look larger than a 2x4 hole in the wall. There wasn't enough room to swing around an ox by the tail. But I was grateful to be in shelter and where I could sit down, for I was shaking like an aspen leaf and cold, and a pretty sick woman. The other mules—men, I mean—had to weather it all outside on deck. Sometimes it was level with the ocean and they had to hold onto ropes like grim death, with the surf and spray going right over the boat at intervals. They were soon wet from the skin out.

By this time we were in sight of St. Michael and could see the Northwestern out in the bay awaiting us. "Oh, hurrah! hurrah!" shouted all, "cheer up, little woman, we are saved at last. Now it won't be long before we do it, do it——."

"Well," I said, "do what?"

"Why, go aboard the Northwestern."

For in our little room we could see nothing only through the door, and this, as it happened, was in the wrong direction to see where we were going.

It was only twenty minutes or so until we were in port—safe and sound, thank the Lord, for all mercies. I picked myself up and tried to walk, but on account of being seasick I felt wobbly, but I got off.

To see that crowd on the wharf was a sight—made up of Northern Commercial Company people and soldiers, for at St. Michael there is a barrack and lots of soldiers, and last but not least, Eskimos, Indians and dogs. Bless their hearts! Real Siberian and Labrador wolf dogs with dark rings of fur round their eyes, and shaggy fur coats with brushy tails curled up over their backs, their tongues hanging out looking like a piece of pink plush ribbon, and looking so proud and spirited as if to say to you: "Well, I am pleased to see you, and what sort of a time did you have?"

sniffing and smelling us all over to see if they knew us.

From out of the crowd came Mr. McCellem. He had stayed over from the Victoria when he saw I did not show up with the rest of the ladies, for he thought:

"By George, it will never do to go on without Mrs. Mallinson, for Mr. Mallinson gave me strict orders to look after her and if she gets left to the mercy of some Indian camp all winter he'll simply skin me alive, so I'll wait here and take a chance."

So here he came and said: "Well, how do you feel?" and asked me a dozen questions straight off before I could get my breath, without giving me a chance to put a word in edgewise, and I was not looking very hard for a chance. But he didn't have to ask how I was for, as he said afterwards, he never saw a person with so white a face in his life.

"Now, you'd better make for the hotel," (which was quite a little walk from the wharf) he said, "and give me the description of your suitcase, and I'll look it up and come after you." Off he went, and Miss Plokki and I wended our way to the hotel. After battling with the north wind in our face, for there never is a place so cold as here with the wind blowing off Bering Sea coast (it would almost blow us over or otherwise pick us up), we arrived at the hotel, and I said to the clerk: "Please give me the warmest room you have," and upstairs he takes us. But Adam's vault could not be colder—not a bit of fire anywhere, but mum was the word with me, for they were only waiting us safely into port to close the place up for the winter. Nearly all the company's men go outside for the winter, for there is nothing to do through the winter. It was now 5 o'clock Saturday evening.

TO OUR MALAMUTES.

Here's to the Malamute, so patient and strong,
Who never complains no matter how long
You work him—he is ever your friend,
And through thick and thin will stay to the end.
No matter how abused and hard-worked on the
trail,
He will always greet you with a cheery bow-wow
and a shake of his tail.
And so you will find him all over Alaska—
Ever faithful, watchful, thankful, and trustful.
Always alongside you wherever you go,
Let it be in summertime or midwinter's snow.
He never gets lost, for he knows how to travel,
Whether it be over snowbanks or miles of rough
gravel.
He is the lifesaver of man, and never balks or
pouts,
And you'll find none better than our friend,
Malamute.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE RETURN TO SEATTLE.

FROM ST. MICHAEL TO NOME AND FROM NOME TO SEATTLE—A THRILLING LIGHTERING EXPERIENCE—FALSE REPORT THAT THE NORTHWESTERN WAS LOST—SCENES ON OUR ARRIVAL—AT MUSIC STUDIES AT LAST.

AND now a few words as to my journeys from St. Michael to Nome, and from Nome to Seattle, where I arrived on the 3rd of November, 1913. As the reader probably has noticed, my three trunks, and other belongings, had been left behind, but I was assured that they would follow me later, and they did. On passing to my hotel in St. Michael, where I remained over night, I heard a phonograph in an Eskimo cabin playing a song of Harry Lauder's "Those Wedding Bells Were Ringing," also "How McNab Kissed the Bride," and the "Trail of the Lonesome Pine." The latter made me think of the "Trail of the Lonesome Spruce" on the Yukon, but this song has not yet been written. It seemed as if Harry Lauder was doing good even among the Eskimo and Indian fish camps on Bering Sea. I slept soundly that night in a bitter cold room, and the following morning, Sunday, October 20, we got up early, for Miss Plokki was with me. We prepared to go aboard the Northwestern, for she was to take us to Nome, whence we were to go to Seattle in the same vessel.

St. Michael is a military reservation, having several companies of infantry. The Northern Navigation Company maintains offices, warehouses, shipyards, machine shops and hotels, laundry, for this is a transfer point for passengers and freight between ocean and river steamers in summertime. The Eskimos go in winter up to the Arctic catching seals, polar bears and walrus, the latter for the value of the ivory.

The inhabitants of this place, outside of the soldiers and their families, are Eskimos, and they make their living by fishing, trapping, selling curios in the summertime to the tourists.

Next morning, Sunday, October 20, we were to sail, and I arose, feeling stiff in the bones. After lunch we made our way down to the wharf, while the clerks, etc., looked up the hotel and fixed up things that would not be in use all winter, and saying "Good-bye" to a few who were to be left to act as watchmen and to open up the place in the summer by the time the first boat arrived.

Once more we boarded the Meteor, which was to take us to the Northwestern, and once more climbed up a rope ladder on to deck, holding as tight as a leech. The boys were wearing the big smile that won't rub off and telling one another, "This beats a dozen Hermons."

"Well I should smile," said Red.

The sun was setting, making a pretty background, with the sea ebbing and rolling, and the large boat so high out of the water, for she had nothing but us to take back and so was light. I stood and took in the sights, for the Meteor had several trips to make to and fro, but as she came for the last time I was leaning against the railing looking over, and to my horror what should I see but a man standing on the top of a casket that evidently some one was taking out—a remains that had been dear to their heart while in life. However, this man was as unconcerned as a wooden Indian. What did it matter if he did stand on top of a casket. And while I thus stood as in a trance someone touched me on the elbow. I turned around to find the Captain of the Hermon. He looked very grave and sad. He said: "Do you see that?"

"Yes," I said, "and imagine that cold-hearted huddlehum standing on top of it!"

"Well," said the Captain, "you remember what you told me in my fortune about a brother or some dear friend dying?"

"Oh, yes."

"Well, you were right, for true it was. This man is not my brother. I esteemed him as such.

He was my best chum. Oh, I feel awful,—just awful!"

"Too bad," I said.

"And I sure had the 'big kick' at the office. Some guy had made a kick about me, because I didn't pay attention to my navigating. The mutt! I'd like to wring his neck. Now, to be frank with you, little woman, I laughed up my sleeve at your fortune telling. But, as I believe open confession is good for the soul, I'll admit I was from Missouri (I had to be shown), and I feel like apologizing, but I'll 'fess up.' I think you far smarter than the rest of us, and you've held up bravely."

By this time the remains was hoisted up and put away on ice. His name was Mr. Moses. He had lived at St. Michael for many years. His wife was aboard, taking the remains outside to be deposited in the family plot. Back East everybody loved him. He was pleasant to meet and was kind and thoughtful to everyone. He was a thirty-second degree Mason, and that order of Seattle was going to meet Mrs. Moses and the remains at the wharf and see to the shipping of it back East.

All was in readiness for our departure and we started, with volumes of black smoke towering out of the chimney or funnel. And the greasy smoke, like an inky cloak, went streaking across the sky. We said "Au Revoir" to St. Michael, some of us forever, while others were to return in the Spring, full of life and activity, ready to tackle the Land of the Midnight Sun again.

When we all got settled I noticed in the crowd a lady heavily dressed in mourning, pale and haggard looking, and inclined to stoutness. She was sitting in the social hall, which loked like a palace compared with the Herman. My big and soft heart went out to her, for I knew without investigating the fact that she was Mr. Moses' widow.

We arrived at Nome about noon on Monday, where anyone could go ashore by paying the purser two dollars for the round trip. You will remember there is no harbor at Nome. We had four hours' leave of absence. We were taken aboard a small gasoline launch and rode for a mile and a half. Then we were put onto a pier or tower built very high up, with cement, right in the bay. We had to climb up by ladder (I was getting used to ladders by this time). There were quite a few of us going ashore, sight-seeing, from off this tower.

We were put into a cage and were drawn to shore by cable power. Thus we were suspended in mid-air by a cable, and some hundred feet from the surging Bering Sea. Of course, we had to hold on to the rails, for it would be worth our lives to move lest we would tilt to one side and lose our balance. Talk about cold—umph! Whew! It went through like a driven nail, and I was numb in a few minutes. I was the only lady that was going.

We landed on the beach by being lowered down gradually, and simply walked out of our cage. I always praise the bridge that carries me over safely, so I thought it was not so bad after all.

I felt pretty much like a dog at a fair looking for his master. You know how that is—up and down, turn and go back—until I was hopelessly muddled. I at last inquired of a man where those friends of mine lived. He came along and pointed out the cabin. Outside of seeing this man, the place looked like the City of the Dead. But I found my friends and they were pleased to see me, for I had not seen them for nine years.

I was glad to get safely back to the steamer again, so as to be on board ready for the start. I had not long to wait. We soon were away. Now, about the fifth day the wireless operator caught a message that it was reported on the outside that the Northwestern was lost, for nothing could be learned of her, and they feared she had gone down. The operator right away contradicted the report and assured the outside that all was well on board, trying to prevent the mistake from being published in the papers. He did not get it out quick enough, for it was in the Fairbanks papers next day.

Now, for the last two weeks, it appears that Mr. Mallinson had had his misgivings about me. He could not sleep nor have peace of mind anywhere. When he read the account of the Northwestern, he said "That's the trouble," and off he made for Fairbanks, and dogged it at that, on foot, for it was past train time and there was only one train a day. When he got there, at the N. C. Co., and inquired, they told him that all the passengers had gone down to Seattle on the Victoria, and that we were in the Spirit City by that time.

Nevertheless, they knew that somewhere, on the Northwestern, were the people that got marooned on the Hermon, and if she was sunk, some Fairbanks people went down with her. They wired the next day to find out. It was contradicted, but I was not conscious of all this commotion in Fairbanks, for I was busy on my collar and trying to get fat.

In the meantime all my friends in Fairbanks were having a tearful time, for they all had a big lamentation. I told them before I left that I could never stop talking (for they knew my weakness) unless the boat went down, and then there would be an end to this chatterbox. They laughed and told me that no boat would have the nerve to sink with me on it—"not on your life."

"Oh," I said, "many a jest has come true, nevertheless," and I told Mr. Mallinson: "You'll have a nice time when I am gone, all to yourself. You can read your newspaper in peace, minus interruption." But I guess when he heard this rumor, he thought he would rather have me around the house. He might have been repeating the poet's words:

"Oh, for a touch of a vanished hand,
And the sound of a voice that's stilled."

On our last morning on shipboard there was land to be seen on nearly all sides, and we were told that we would be in Seattle by noon. We had an 11 o'clock lunch before leaving the boat, and by that time we were in sight of the wharf. Of course, by this time, every man, woman, and child was to the front of the boat, taking in the sight, amid cheers and "How-do-you-do's," and shouts from the wharf by people that recognized some one in our crowd.

Finally the gangplank was lowered and the big stampede took place. It seemed to me they couldn't get off quick enough, but, after all, I felt as if I was not so anxious to go. But it came my turn to go, so Mr. McCellem, Miss Plokki and myself went. Mr. McCellem held on to my suitcase.

While on deck I could not see a soul I knew, or even looked familiar. When I did actually put my feet on solid ground I was pulled, pushed, pinched and shaken almost to death by people that knew me. They could not all get to me for the mass of people, but would reach arm's-length over people's shoulders to shake hands with me, or poke me with their umbrella or stick. When I did get out in the clearing where I could catch my breath, all that knew me were around me, like niggers at an election, asking questions. Most of them were the passengers who went ahead of us in the first batch from the Hermon, such as Mr. and Mrs. Alberg, Mr. Wilson, who tried to make a little crude love to Miss Plokki while he was with us; also "Dutch." You may be sure he was there with both feet, and with a smile that spread all over his face and half-way down his neck. He was more than pleased to see the "little English woman" safe and sound in Seattle.

Well, the most terrible experiences of my life, in the way of travel and adventure, were, for the time at least, at an end, and, after getting settled, I began the study and practice of music. This I had risked and endured much to be able to do.

THE END.

Here's to the roughneck who has sunk many a hole,
And has shoveled and picked and tunneled days untold
In order to locate the much coveted metal,
With patience and nerve that seldom gets nettled.

EXTRACTS
FROM ALASKAN POEMS.

By Mrs. Florence Lee Mallinson.

DURING the long and busy residence of Mrs. Mallinson in Alaska she devoted considerable effort, mostly in the way of pastime, in the lonesome, weary hours of the long winters, writing poetry, on which line she has developed considerable talent. The publishers have examined many of these productions and from a few which touch closely upon the subjects of this book have made the following extracts:

WHERE THE YUKON IS ROLLING BY.

Where dear old Yukon's flowing;
  Where the boys work hard all day;
And they never are so happy as
  When they find the "pay."
And the moment that they find it
  They're as generous as can be,
And you'll never find their equal
  While the Yukon is rolling by.

Sure, I'm tired here of waiting,
And now I'll soon be sailing
Back to dear Alaska,
And there I'll always stay.
And the moment that my Malamutes
See me, they'll howl for joy,
For they are the truest kind of comrades,
Where the Yukon goes rolling by.

For I long to be there with the boys once more,
And my heart is growing sore
Just to hear the mighty Yukon
With its swift and fearful roar;
For I would not trade one year in Alaska
  For two on the big outside.
To be living in Alaska
  Fills my heart with pride.

There I'll cook my beans and bacon,
With a stack of hot cakes on the side,
And my onions and potatoes
Together I will fry.
For you bet, a "sourdough" dinner
  Never, never, can taste sweeter, or just right
Only when cooked with Yukon waters
  And eaten with a Yukon appetite.

So I am starting off tomorrow,
  To hit the trail once more, with all my might,
For then I'll know no sorrow
  And I'll feel that all is right.
And when my time has come to die
I'll wish my friends a long "Good-bye,"
Then I'll lay me down without a sigh,
Close to where the Yukon goes rolling by.

A SOURDOUGH'S LONGINGS.

Oh, I want to go back to Alaska,
To the country where they don't ask you
Whether you have a dime or a dollar,
So long as you are a jolly good fellow.

For the North my heart is yearning,
Where the mighty Yukon's flowing;
Where you enjoy your beans and bacon,
  And then when you are through
Just take a ride in summer
  In your birch bark canoe.

In your dear old log cabin
You can sit by your log fire,
And have the boys a-coming
To tell their tales galore.
And from out your cabin window
  You can watch the Northern Light.
When it's fifty-two below in winter,
  It is sure a pretty sight.

When in the golden summer
  And the sun shines all the day,
You bet it is a hummer,
  When the boys have got the "pay."

It is then you think you've got all you want,
  And never more will roam.
Yes, when I get back to Alaska—
  To dear old sweet home—
I'll thank my stars I'm living,
  And never more will roam.

There I'll build me a nice log cabin
  With some spruce trees outside the door,
And fix a bunk in one corner,
  With lots of grub upon the floor.
Then I'll be so happy with my Malamutes four,
Sleeping in their kennel just outside my cabin door.

AN ALASKA TOAST.

Here's to the long winter with Northern Lights
Flitting across the starry heights,
While you speed along over frozen streams
To a dance, twenty miles, behind your Malamute teams,
Singing songs with faces aglow,
As over the snow you merrily go to your destination.
And you dance to the music with determination
Till the clock strikes twelve, and the coffee you smell,
With sandwich in hand you love to dwell,
Till you hear the tune from the violin,
And up you start to dance and sing,
And from the violin bow comes "Turkey in the Straw,"
And you declare it's the "best time you ever saw."
After having waltzed the "Home, Sweet Home."
You wish all "Good-bye" and hitch up your teams
And quickly fly over the long-frozen streams,
And forget it all in your slumber of dreams.